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Kim, Kanye continue tradition of excess in celebrity nuptials

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Kurt Busch looks to make history with Indy-Charlotte double

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# STARS AND STRIPES.®

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MIDEAST EDITION

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Free to Deployed Areas

## VA ALLEGATIONS

# WE JUST FEEL ABANDONED

- Vets, advocates air 'disappointment' with Obama's response to accusations
- House panel tells VA officials to appear next week or face subpoenas
- Bill would give Shinseki greater authority to fire senior management

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VA Secretary Eric Shinseki

AP

## Camp Humphreys 'on track' for 2017, top Army official says

By ASHLEY ROWLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — The twice-delayed expansion of the U.S. military's future flagship installation in South Korea — so large that officials have likened it to building a small city — is on track to be completed in 2016-17, according to a top Army official.

Forty percent of construction at Camp Humphreys has been com-

pleted, including the initial development of the site, and planning and construction on the rest of the expansion is underway, according to Katherine Hammack, the Army's assistant secretary for installations, energy and environment.

"They're on track, they're on schedule, so we do think we're going to reach substantial completion by 2017," said Hammack, who visited Humphreys in March for the first time in

two years for a progress report. Some small projects will remain at Humphreys after that date, she said.

"There's always the final finishing touches — the road that might not yet be paved or the last motor pool that might not yet be completed," she said. But most units slated for relocation will be able to move by then and the majority of bases they vacate will be ready for return to South Korea.

SEE HUMPHREYS ON PAGE 10



Construction is underway on troop barracks at Camp Humphreys in South Korea.

ARMANDO R. LIMON  
*Stars and Stripes*

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

**"What seems to be spit turns out to be a nail. I don't give it much importance."**

— The Rev. Gabriele Amorth, the Catholic Church's best-known exorcist, discussing "the stuff that gets spewed from mouths" when people are brought to him for an exorcism

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5. Army veteran at last gets U.S. citizenship he thought he already had

## COMING SOON

Video games  
"Mercenary Kings"



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## MIDEAST

# Afghans back on campaign trail

By HEATH DRUZIN  
Stars and Stripes

KABUL — The campaign for Afghanistan's second round of presidential elections kicked off Thursday with many concerned that this winner-take-all phase could raise tensions in a country poised for its first-ever democratic transition of power.

At opening-day campaign rallies Thursday for the remaining two candidates — former Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah, and former Finance Minister Ashraf Ghani — supporters expressed concerns about an unfair result and showed a willingness to take to the streets if they were fraud.

"All the people of the country should convince the candidates that if one wins, the other should accept the result without causing tension," Abdullah supporter Arbab Mirwais Sarfaraz said. "But if someone wins through corruption, we will resist."

Roughly 7 million voters turned out in the first round of voting on April 5. That poll was hailed by both Afghans and the international community for its high turnout and relative lack of violence in major urban centers — although rural areas saw a spate of attacks and 400,000 votes were thrown out due to irregularities. Because no one received a majority, Abdullah and Ghani will square off as the top two vote-getters in a second round scheduled for June 14.

With President Hamid Karzai — the only leader Afghanistan has known since the U.S. ousted the ruling Taliban in 2001 — constitutionally barred from running for another term, the next president will be crucial both to stabilizing a country still at war and to mending a strained relationship with Washington, with whose leaders Karzai frequently clashed.

Both candidates have said they will sign a crucial security agreement with the U.S. that would pave the way for a small U.S. and allied military force to stay for training and counterterrorism missions past Dec. 31, the deadline for all international combat troops to leave the country.

During the first round of voting, no one was close to the out-



PHOTOS BY HEATH DRUZIN/Stars and Stripes

**Afghan presidential candidate Ashraf Ghani, center right, greets former Afghan President Hazrat Mujadidi at a kickoff rally for Ghani's campaign in the second round of the Afghan presidential elections Thursday in Kabul.**



**Afghan presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah addresses supporters at a kickoff rally for his campaign Thursday in Kabul.**

right majority needed to avoid a run-off, despite complaints of fraud and biased election bodies.

The two top vote-getters were so far ahead of their rivals that there was little impetus to mobilize supporters for the kind of protests that analysts fear could divide the country and cause unrest. This next ballot will be decisive and the most important outcome may not be who wins, but whether the loser accepts the results.

Both Abdullah and Ghani had hoped to win an outright majority in the first round to avoid a run-off, but their main focus was on

at least qualifying for the second round of voting, said Martine van Bijlert, co-director of the Kabul-based Afghanistan Analysts Network.

She said the winner-take-all run-off promises to be a "much fiercer competition," and a disputed result could raise tensions in the country making the conduct and credibility of Afghanistan's much-criticized election commissions crucial to an accepted outcome.

"If it's a close election, it could become a contest over quite small numbers of disqualifications," van Bijlert said. "Then it becomes extremely important that everyone trusts the decisions of the election bodies, which hasn't been the case in the first round."

The Independent Election Commission, responsible for administering the election, and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission, which investigates voting irregularities, were roundly criticized by candidates, voters, and election observers for a variety of problems in the first round of voting, including ballot shortages, lack of transparency and delays in announcing results.

Many experts worry the commissions haven't done enough to fix the problems. Jandam Spinghar, director of the independent election monitoring group, Election Watch Afghanistan, said

the issue of polling stations running out of ballots particularly incensed both voters and candidates and that it could happen again.

"Unfortunately, we haven't seen any strong mechanism from the (Independent Election) Commission's side to make sure in the second round similar shortages don't occur," he said.

Spinghar said he is cautiously optimistic the second-round vote will go smoothly, but with the stakes so much higher this time he worries missteps by the commissions could make people question the legitimacy of the election, which could lead to protests, prompting a crisis.

Younus Fakar, an independent political analyst in Kabul, would like to see Abdullah and Ghani publicly agree to respect the results of the election and step aside after the vote if they lose.

"If they sign an agreement, it will decrease tensions in the future," he said.

After more than 30 years of war, many Afghans have little appetite for further strife and are pinning their hopes on the election to preserve what fragile gains have been made in the country since the U.S. Taliban were ousted.

For Shafiq Shuja Qaderi, 50, a Kabul schoolteacher, a smooth transition of power is crucial to continuing to improve the rights of women, who were brutally repressed under the Taliban and still face widespread abuses, despite new laws aimed at protecting them from violence and discrimination.

"The last 10 years, a lot has been done for women in this country," she said. "We need those achievements maintained and continued."

For many, a democratic transition also holds the key to finally escaping the spiral of war that has enveloped the country since the Soviet Union invaded in 1979.

"The election is crucial," Juma Khan, 62, a Kabul shopkeeper, said. "We want to live in peace, and through elections, we can achieve that."

Zubair Babakarkhal contributed to this report. [druzin@starsandstripes.com](mailto:druzin@starsandstripes.com)  
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## MIDEAST



JOHN M. MCCALL/Courtesy of the U.S. Marine Corps

Marine Corps Cpl. Mark Hickok patrols through a field during a clearing mission in Marja in Afghanistan's Helmand province in 2011.

# Resurgent Afghan opium trade is 'a virus'

BY ABDUL KHALIQ  
AND KAY JOHNSON  
The Associated Press

**P**INK-AND-WHITE poppy blooms stretch toward the horizon in this field in southern Afghanistan as laborers slice open the green bulbs swollen with raw opium, the main ingredient in heroin.

The opium from Marjah, a district in southern Helmand province, likely will make its way to drug addicts in the region and the world. Helmand's harvest this year is expected to be one of the largest ever, mirroring trends in the rest of Afghanistan.

This year's bumper crop, after the U.S. has spent \$7.5 billion trying to eradicate opium in Afghanistan, represents one of the most tangible and visible failures as the American-led military force prepares to withdraw by the end of this year. With Afghanistan's emerging anti-narcotics forces vastly outnumbered both by Taliban brokers and corrupt officials involved in the trade, the opium trade likely will only grow.

"Poppy is like a virus that is already embedded in a sick body," said Ashita Mittal, acting country director for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Kabul. "It is going to impact the whole economy of this country. We do believe that in the

**'We do believe that in the absence of the growth of the licit economy, the illicit economy will take over.'**

**Ashita Mittal**  
U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime

absence of the growth of the licit economy, the illicit economy will take over."

Last year, 806 square miles of poppy were planted across Afghanistan, up 36 percent over the year before and producing an estimated 6,062 tons of opium, according to the U.N. drug agency. By comparison, only a little more than 27 square miles of poppy field were eradicated.

The 2014 harvest is expected to match or even exceed last year's record. In coming years, opium will grab an even larger share of Afghanistan's already troubled economy, as money from U.S. military contracts and aid work dries up. The U.N. estimates that some 200,000 families in Afghanistan are involved in opium production already and that the country has some 1 million addicts.

As a share of Afghanistan's economy, opium looms large: The U.N. estimates the

potential gross value of Afghan opiates last year was around \$3 billion — equal to 15 percent of the country's gross domestic product.

Throughout the U.S.-led mission in Afghanistan, it has worked with Afghan forces to try to eradicate opium — a major source of funding for the Taliban insurgency. At first, that meant hacking down and burning fields, though later troops sought to persuade farmers to plant alternative crops.

A recent report to the U.S. Congress by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction said Washington has spent \$7.5 billion on the effort. For a few years, opium production dropped, but as the NATO withdrawal looms, more farmers are turning back to poppies.

For Marjah farmer Mohammad Ayub, the choice is easy. Opium poppies are easier to grow than other crops, they are easy to convert into quick cash and far more profitable. He said he can earn \$7,000 growing poppies for opium on his land, while he can barely break even planting cotton.

"Opium has a good income, and that is why people are cultivating it with all its problems," Ayub said. "We are not scared from the government, because most of the officials have their share in the harvesting."

In Marjah, the resurgence of opium is particularly striking because the Helmand district was touted in 2009 as a showcase

of the U.S. military's "surge" strategy of driving Taliban from the area. At the time, the American coalition flew journalists to newly liberated Marjah to see efforts to convert poppy fields to wheat, grapes and other crops and install a clean, competent local administration, memorably described at the time as a "government in a box."

In 2009, opium cultivation in Helmand — by far Afghanistan's largest producer — dropped by 33 percent to about 270 square miles. It continued to fall before ticking back up in 2012. Last year, though, poppy cultivation surged to more than 386 square miles, almost the same level as before the big U.S. push into Helmand.

The Taliban have not regained the same level of dominance they once had in Marjah, but they are active enough to make the area too insecure for many government activities, including poppy eradication.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Helmand Gov. Mohammad Naeem blamed the rise of opium cultivation on a resurgent Taliban.

"In the areas under the control of the government the cultivation has decreased dramatically, but in areas where there are Taliban the cultivation still exists because the Taliban are persuading people to get more money," Naeem said.

The governor also said there is resistance from local people in eradicating opium because they are dependent on its income.



## EUROPE

# Breedlove: NATO needs to keep its options open

Commander says positioning troops in Eastern Europe should be considered

By JOHN VANDIVER  
Stars and Stripes

BRUSSELS — NATO should not rule out positioning forces in Eastern Europe in light of Russia's newly aggressive stance, which now demands that the alliance find fresh ways to boost its state of readiness, NATO's top military officer said Thursday.

Gen. Philip Breedlove, NATO supreme allied commander, also said there were some signs that Russian forces positioned along the border with Ukraine were redeploying, but that a sizable fighting force remained in the area. Earlier this week, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Russian units would begin returning to their home garrisons.

"We need to be very honest, we are seeing some movement," Breedlove told reporters. "The size and scope of it is not exactly clear yet."

NATO has said the Russian army had assembled about 40,000 combat-ready troops along the border with eastern Ukraine, where pro-Russia separatist groups have been fighting with Ukrainian government troops. On Thursday, at least 11 Ukrainian troops were killed when pro-Russia forces attacked a military checkpoint, The Associated Press reported.

"We don't see movement in two of the areas that are very con-

cerning to us," Breedlove said, without elaborating. In order to de-escalate tensions along the border, he said, a "100 percent withdrawal" of Russian forces from the area would be required.

He was speaking at the end of a two-day meeting of the alliance's defense chiefs in Brussels devoted mainly to the situation in Ukraine.

Breedlove signaled that the NATO Response Force, formed a decade ago as the alliance's rapid-deployment force, must play a key role as NATO attempts to ensure it is capable of fielding forces in the event of a sudden crisis.

"Are we asking it (the NRF) to do the right things?" Breedlove asked. "Is it responsive enough to meet the new threat?"

Breedlove, who also commands U.S. European Command, said that NATO's task now is to prepare itself for a future in which Russia can no longer be regarded as a partner.

The NATO Response Force, which includes a Texas-based U.S. Army brigade and about 20,000 European troops, has generally been used for training exercises and peacekeeping activities. As a result, it's not built to mobilize in a matter of hours or days, though it trains as a fighting force.

"I think we need to reset the goals of (the NRF), especially as it relates to responsiveness," Breedlove, said. "We need an



A IVAN SEKRETAREV/AP

**A Ukrainian soldier walks past the remains of an armored vehicle at the site of a gunbattle near the village of Blahodatne, Ukraine, on Thursday. At least 11 Ukrainian troops were killed and about 30 others were wounded when pro-Russia fighters attacked a military checkpoint.**

NRF that is very responsive."

To maintain a NATO force at a higher state of alert, however, will require a more intensive training program and more resources to ensure the troops are mission-ready.

"That will cost money," Breedlove said. "Readiness and responsiveness is not free."

The U.S. has repeatedly taken its European partners to task for reducing defense spending and not shouldering their share of the burden and the U.S. has been drawing down forces in Europe. NATO also should consider moving an element of NRF closer to potential hot spots, Breedlove said. The positioning of NATO

forces in the east, near Russia's borders, is a source of contention within the alliance. Allies in the east have been eager for more NATO presence, but some members in the west, such as Germany, have indicated opposition to any permanent stationing of troops.

Breedlove stopped short of saying whether the forces should be permanently stationed, saying such a move would be a political decision. But he didn't rule it out.

"We have to think about whether we should have forces in the east," Breedlove said. "There are many avenues to explore."

For more than a decade, NATO has viewed Russia as a partner,

and that has been factored into military planning within the alliance, Breedlove said.

Now, the allies must take stock as the security paradigm in Europe has changed, said Breedlove, who argued that Russia's altering of the borders in Ukraine by seizing Crimea has security implications that ripple across Eastern Europe.

"Is our force sized correctly?" Breedlove asked. "Is our force equipped correctly? Is the responsiveness of our force appropriate?"

"We have to look at our structures," he said.

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## White House opposes new timeline on Poland missile interceptor base

By STEVEN BEARDSLEY  
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — The Obama administration says a House plan to accelerate installation of a missile interceptor site in Poland and to deploy short-range air- and missile defense capabilities to the country offer few benefits while risking other defense programs.

Its opposition is included in a document released by the White House this week detailing disagreements with parts of the National Defense Authorization Act being considered in the Republican-controlled House. Taking into account Eastern Europe's recent concerns over Russia, the bill would speed up the timeline for installation of the Aegis Ashore missile interceptor system in Poland to 2016 from the

original finish date of 2018.

"Accelerating the deployment of the Aegis Ashore site by two years would impose large costs on, and risk to, other Navy programs and likely would not change Russia's security calculation in Europe," the White House statement read.

Deployment of the short-range missile batteries by December, as required by the bill, would take from other missile defense priorities, it said.

The Poland site is part of a U.S.-led missile defense shield for the continent, known as the European Phase Adaptive Approach. Other components include ship-based interceptors aboard four U.S. destroyers in Spain, a radar site in Turkey and a command element in Germany. Another shore-based site is being built in

Romania.

The plan has caused a major rift with Russia, which says the shield is aimed against its own nuclear missile arsenal. The U.S. and its NATO allies insist the defense system is meant to protect Europe from potentially hostile countries in the region, such as Iran.

New tensions with Russia after its March invasion of Crimea have resulted in calls for speeding installation of the site. The head of the U.S. Missile Defense Agency, Vice Adm. James Syring, told a House subcommittee in April that acceleration would be possible with additional funding.

The Navy is currently building the Romania interceptor site at an air base in Deveslu, which is scheduled for completion by the end of 2015 and will be manned

by about 200 sailors. Costs of the construction have risen sharply since initial plans. A GAO report released in April found that the combined price of the Romania interceptor site and a test battery in Hawaii have doubled from initial estimates to \$1.6 billion, up from \$813 million.

On Wednesday, the Pentagon announced that the U.S. military on the Hawaiian island of Kauai has conducted the first flight test of the new missile defense system, according to The Associated Press. The Missile Defense Agency and the Navy used the Aegis Weapon System to track a simulated target in Tuesday evening's test, the report said, adding that it successfully intercepted the simulated target using a Standard Missile-3 Block 1B missile.

Poland has accelerated field-

ing its own missile defense shield since the Crimea invasion. The House bill states the country still needs a short-range air and missile defense capability while it develops its own system.

The White House document details its opposition to other aspects of the House bill, including its failure to reform servicemember compensation, its limited funding for the Littoral Combat Ship, and its limits on retiring weapons systems and aircraft like the A-10 Warthog.

The full House is considering the bill for a vote after the House Armed Services Committee approved it two weeks ago. The Senate Armed Services committee will soon release its own draft.

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# Air Force security forces failed nuke test

By ROBERT BURNS  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Armed security forces at a U.S. nuclear missile base failed a drill last summer that simulated the hostile takeover of a missile launch silo because they were unable to speedily regain control of the captured nuclear weapon, according to an internal Air Force review obtained by The Associated Press.

The previously unreported failure, which the Air Force called a "critical deficiency" was the reason the 341st Missile Wing at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana flunked its broader safety-and-security inspection.

The security team was required to respond to the simulated capture of a Minuteman 3 nuclear missile silo, termed an "Empty Quiver" scenario in which a nuclear weapon is lost, stolen or seized. Each of the Air Force's 450 Minuteman 3 silos contains one missile armed with a nuclear warhead and ready for launch on orders from the president.

The review obtained by the AP through a Freedom of Information Act request sought to examine why the security force showed an "inability to effectively respond to a recapture scenario." It cited their failure to take "all lawful actions necessary to immediately regain control of nuclear weapons" but did not specify those actions.

The prize for terrorists or others who might seek to seize control of a missile would be the nuclear warhead attached to it. In 2009, the Air Force cited a "post-9/11 shift in thinking" about such situations, saying that while this nightmare scenario once was considered an impossibility, the U.S. "no longer has the luxury of assuming what is and what is not possible."

The inspection failure was one of a string of nuclear missile corps setbacks revealed by the AP during the past year. The force has suffered embarrassing leadership and training lapses, breakdowns in discipline and morale problems. Earlier this year, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel ordered two parallel nuclear reviews, still underway, to address his concern that those lapses could erode public trust in the security of the nation's nuclear weapons.

The safety and security of nuclear weapons under military control is considered of paramount importance, and thus defense agencies perform detailed, rigorous inspections at regular intervals.

When the Air Force publicly acknowledged the inspection failure in August, it said "technical errors" had been committed during one phase of the inspection, but it did not say the errors were made by security forces. At the time, the Air Force declined to provide details, saying to do so could expose potential vulnerabilities. Security forces, safety officers, logistics teams, missile launch crews and others

participated in the Malmstrom inspection.

Lt. Col. John Sheets, a spokesman for Air Force Global Strike Command, which is responsible for the nuclear missile corps as well as the nuclear-capable bomber aircraft, said Wednesday he could not comment further.

"We cannot divulge additional details of the scenario or the response tactics due to it being sensitive information that could compromise security," Sheets said. He added that all "countermeasures," or corrective actions, that were proposed in the review obtained by the AP have been accomplished. The only excep-

tion is a plan for more extensive practicing of security response tactics at launch silos, a move that requires signed agreements with owners of the private land on which the missile silos are situated.

The Aug 5-13, 2013, inspection, designed to evaluate management and handling of nuclear weapons to ensure they are properly controlled at all times, was repeated two months later and found no security weaknesses.

Security forces are responsible for a range of protective roles on the Air Force's three nuclear missile bases, including along roads used to transport mis-

siles and warheads to and from launch silos, at weapons storage facilities and at launch silos and launch control centers. The Air Force operates three Minuteman 3 bases — in North Dakota, Montana and Wyoming — each with 150 missiles.

The partially censored document provided to the AP describes in broad terms the nature of the inspection failure, its significance and its underlying causes.

It said insufficient training was at the heart of the problem, beginning with a lack of familiarity among the security forces with "complex scenario" exercises. It also cited unspecified shortcom-

ings in "leadership culture" and a lack of standardized simulations not only at Malmstrom but throughout the nuclear missile corps.

Among the corrective measures cited in the report was to arrange to hold recapture exercises at one launch silo among the 50 silos in each of the 341st's three Minuteman squadrons, using "realistic, varied, simple-to-complex" scenarios based on what the Pentagon calls its "local nuclear security threat capabilities assessment." Also, the Air Force is taking steps to more closely track lessons learned from each "recapture" exercise.



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## MILITARY

# House rebuffs DOD on spending

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House on Thursday overwhelmingly backed a \$601 billion defense authorization bill that spares planes, ships and military bases in an election-year nod to hometown interests.

Ignoring a White House veto threat, Republicans and Democrats united behind the popular measure that authorizes spending on weapons and personnel for the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1. The vote was 325-98 for the legislation, which must be reconciled with a work-in-progress Senate version.

The Pentagon had proposed re-

tiring the Cold War-era U-2 spy plane and the A-10 Warthog close-air support aircraft as well as

Spending on the military is being cut after more than a decade of fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, and deficit-driven budget reductions are taking a toll.

Working within spending limits, the Pentagon proposed retiring decades-old aircraft programs, including the A-10 Warthog, a close air support plane, and the U-2.

The Defense Department also sought congressional approval to close military bases deemed unnecessary and slightly increase out-of-pocket costs for housing and health care.

## Military identifies Marine who fell from Osprey, died

Stars and Stripes

Military officials have identified the Marine who died after falling out of an MV-22B Osprey during a training flight Monday night.

Lance Cpl. Steven M. Hancock fell from the tilt-rotor aircraft, which functions as both a helicopter and an airplane, about 6:30 p.m. near Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C.

During a joint search by military and civilian agencies, crews from a military aircraft spotted Hancock's body Tuesday afternoon. It was found on state forest land 96 miles south of Raleigh, according to Bladen County, N.C., Coroner Hubert Kinlaw.

Hancock was with the Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron 204, based out of MCAS New River.

"I want to pass along our sincere thanks to all who assisted us in recovering Lance Cpl. Hancock," Maj. Gen. Robert Hedelund, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing commanding general, said in a statement.

"This is a very tragic loss to 2nd MAMW, Marine Aircraft Group 26 and VMFT-204, but your professional, compassionate and genuine care is welcomed and greatly appreciated."

Details surrounding Hancock's death are under investigation.

Information from The Associated Press was used in this report.

## Missile cruiser Vella Gulf to enter Black Sea for training

Stars and Stripes

The guided-missile cruiser USS Vella Gulf will enter the Black Sea on Friday, the latest U.S. warship to visit the region amid tensions between Russia and the West over Ukraine.

The ship's crew will train with allies and will be available for security cooperation, according to Pentagon spokesman Col. Steve Warren. Recent deployments to the Black Sea by other U.S. warships have included exercises and port visits with Romania, Bulgaria and Georgia.

The U.S. has increased its presence in the Black Sea in recent months in an effort to reassure allies since the March invasion of Ukraine's Crimea Peninsula by Russian troops.

The consecutive visits of U.S. warships also sends a message to

Russia, which frowned upon U.S. operations in the Black Sea even before recent events and whose Black Sea Fleet is located in Sevastopol. Previous U.S. visits to the Black Sea were typically separated by months.

Recent deployments to the region have largely been quiet, although an unarmed Russian fighter jet buzzed the destroyer USS Cook multiple times in international waters in the western Black Sea on April 12, according to the Pentagon.

"The ship's presence in the Black Sea demonstrates the United States' commitment to working closely with allies to enhance maritime security and stability," Warren said of the Vella Gulf.

The frigate USS Taylor was the previous ship in the region, leaving the Black Sea on March 12.

news@stripes.com

## Brig. Gen. Coots assumes Army's top medical position in Europe

Stars and Stripes

Brig. Gen. Norvell V. Coots on Thursday replaced Col. John P. Collins as commander of Europe Regional Medical Command, the Army's top medical post in Europe.

Coots comes to the job after serving as deputy commanding general (support) for the U.S. Army Medical Command and assistant surgeon general for force projection in the Army's Office of the Surgeon General in Falls Church, Va.

Coots' arrival puts a one-star general back in command of ERMC, fulfilling a commitment the Army's surgeon general voiced last year when Collins as-

sumed the position of "interim" commander in the midst of a reorganization of top positions in military medicine. Lt. Gen. Patricia D. Horoho, the Army surgeon general, said at the time that she was committed to having a general atop ERMC.

Collins' tenure was expected to run from three to six months while the reorganization shook out, but instead lasted the better part of a year. Collins' predecessor, Jeffrey B. Clark, was also a colonel for nearly his entire tenure as commander of ERMC.

Collins, a 30-year Army veteran, will retire this summer, according to the command.

Some of Coots' more recent military assignments include

surgeon general of U.S. Forces-Afghanistan from May 2012 to March 2013 and commander of the Walter Reed Health Care System from July 2008 to August 2011.

ERMC oversees a health care system that includes numerous clinics, war zone medical logistics, humanitarian assistance and Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, the military's only overseas trauma center. With more than 5,500 joint service personnel under its umbrella, it supports three major commands — Europe, Central and Africa Commands — as well as U.S. Army Europe and medical units in Afghanistan.

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## Berger to gain star, lead Marine force

By JON HARPER

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Maj. Gen. David Berger will become commander of the I Marine Expeditionary Force, the Defense Department announced Wednesday. The I MEF is based at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Berger, who with the move will be promoted to lieutenant general, is currently the commander of both the Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command and the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, at Twentynine

Palms, Calif.

Berger was commissioned as an infantry officer in 1981. He served as a company commander and battalion operations officer in the 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion during Operation Desert Storm. He later commanded Regimental Combat Team 8 in Fallujah during Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the 1st Marine Division (Forward) in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Among other assignments, Berger also served as an instructor at Marine Aviation Weapons

and Tactics Squadron One; an instructor at III MEF Special Operations Training Group; and a policy planner on the Joint Staff.

He holds a bachelor's degree in engineering from Tulane University, and a master of international public policy from Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

Berger's promotion and appointment as commander of I MEF must be confirmed by the Senate.

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## MILITARY

# USAF troops join search for missing girls

By NANCY MONTGOMERY  
Stars and Stripes

VICENZA, Italy — Some 80 U.S. Air Force troops sent to Chad in Central Africa join a growing international effort to help find and rescue about 276 Nigerian schoolgirls who were abducted by an Islamist extremist group last month.

The Air Force troops are mostly crew members, maintenance specialists and security officers for unarmed Predator surveillance drones searching for the girls taken by the group, Boko Haram.

"These personnel will support the operation of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft for missions over northern Nigeria and the surrounding area," the White House said in a statement formally notifying Congress about the deployment.

For more than a week, the U.S. military has been flying manned and unmanned surveillance aircraft from Italy and other parts of Africa over densely forested regions in northeastern Nigeria, where officials believe the captors, who have said they'd sell the girls into slavery, are believed to be hiding them.

"Our sense at this point is that they've been dispersed into multiple smaller groups," Amanda Dory, the Pentagon's top Africa policy official, said during a hearing of the House Foreign Affairs Committee on Wednesday. "They may or may not all be in Nigeria."

Boko Haram was designated a terrorist

**'The problem has become regional, if not a Western problem.'**

Cameroon President Paul Biya

organization by the State Department last year. The group, founded more than a decade ago, seeks to establish a fundamentalist Islamic state ruled by sharia law. The intensity of its attacks increased in 2011 when large quantities of Libyan government weapons became available after rebel groups — backed by NATO air power — ousted the former regime of Moammar Gadhafi.

The group has killed more than 3,000 people, experts say, and has carried out a number of kidnappings. Its members kidnapped a French family in northern Cameroon last year and just last week abducted at least 10 Chinese workers.

"They have committed one more attack, attacked businessmen and this comes after the French hostages were kidnapped," Cameroon President Paul Biya said in Paris, according to Reuters. "As we speak we are searching for an Italian priest and a Canadian nun. The problem has become regional, if not a Western problem."

The deployment to Chad brings more surveillance aircraft closer to the affected area. Those will operate from an

air base long used by France, the former colonial power in Chad, in the capital of N'Djamena.

The unit will remain in Chad, "until its support in resolving the kidnapping situation is no longer required," the White House statement said.

The Chad deployment follows an advisory group of 16 military personnel sent to Nigeria by the U.S. Africa Command, along with FBI and intelligence officials, as part of a U.S. State Department effort to assist the Nigerian government in finding and recovering the missing girls.

U.S. Army Africa announced that it has sent personnel, along with special forces troops to Nigeria to train a Nigerian ranger battalion in combat operations. Previously, USAF had trained African troops in peacekeeping operations.

"We will provide fundamentals of patrolling, small unit tactics, ambush/raid attack, movements of contact, night operations as opposed to the more traditional UN focused peace keeping tasks like patrolling, cordon and search, and establish checkpoints," Lt. Col. Vinnie Garbarino, USAF's International Military Engagements Officer, said on the USAF website.

"We want these soldiers to take the fight to Boko Haram in the restricted terrain and really eliminate the threat within their borders so they can get back to peacekeeping operations."

The Nigerian ranger battalion has been vetted for human rights abuses, as required by the Leahy Law — named for

Vermont Sen. Patrick Leahy — which bars the U.S. from providing training or equipment to foreign troops or units who commit "gross human rights violations" such as rape, murder or torture.

The Nigerian military has carried out mass executions, burned hundreds of homes and committed other abuses in its battle against Boko Haram, according to Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

While Boko Haram — which stands for "western education is evil" — is loathed by much of the population for its brutality, the Nigerian army also has a poor record for respecting human rights.

A State Department inspector general's report last year said that of 1,377 Nigerian soldiers vetted in 2012 to receive training, 211 were rejected or suspended because of rights concerns.

Finding army units that have not been involved in abuses has been a "persistent and very troubling limitation" on American efforts to work with the Nigerians, Alice Friend, the Pentagon's principal director for African Affairs, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee earlier this month.

Neighboring African nations expressed an interest last week at a meeting in Paris to, as Chad President Idriss Deby put it, "launch a war, a total war on Boko Haram," according to Reuters.

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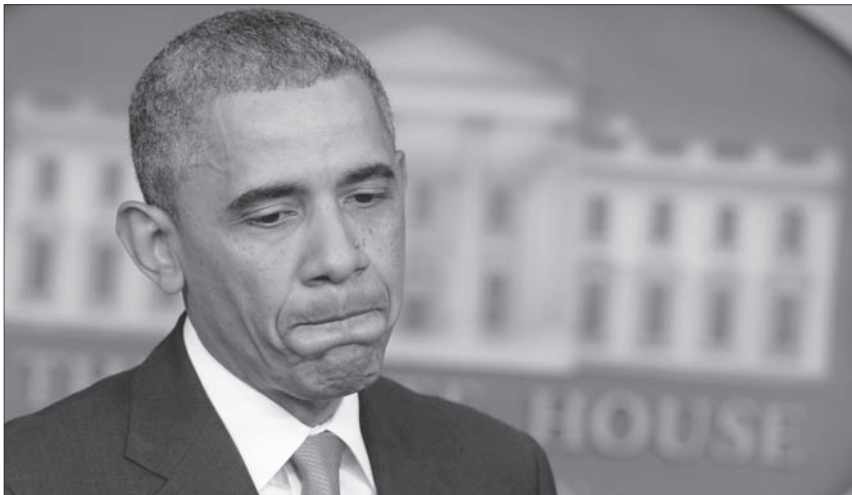
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## VA ALLEGATIONS



President Barack Obama speaks at the White House on Wednesday following his meeting with Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki.

# 'Tremendous disappointment'

Obama's 'long-overdue' remarks on VA scandal do little to put minds at ease

By JENNIFER HLAD  
Stars and Stripes

When President Barack Obama spoke Wednesday about the growing scandals at the Department of Veterans Affairs, some veterans asked why it took so long for their commander in chief to speak up.

Darrell Richardson attended a town hall meeting in Phoenix last week to tell fellow veterans about the death of his brother, Dennis. Since then, Richardson has been speaking out about the problems with the VA, and asking why Obama and others had not commented or taken action.

"We just feel abandoned," he said.

Dennis Richardson had been diagnosed with liver cancer at a civilian hospital in July 2012, but when he tried to get an appointment at the Phoenix VA, he was told he would have to wait seven months, his brother said.

A few months later, Dennis' pain was so severe that he went to the VA's emergency room for help. He was started on chemotherapy, but stopped the treatments after a few weeks because he was so sick, Darrell said. He died Nov. 8, 2012.

At this point, Richardson said, the president and the VA should be finding veterans who have life-threatening illnesses that require immediate appointments, and getting them in front of doctors.

"Let's find out who needs care right now, and get them in for

**'Let's find out who needs care right now, and get them in for an appointment. If the president would have said that [Wednesday] morning, I would have been absolutely ecstatic.'**

Darrell Richardson

an appointment. If the president would have said that [Wednesday] morning, I would have been absolutely ecstatic," he said.

After a closed-door meeting Wednesday with VA Secretary Eric Shinseki and Deputy Chief of Staff Rob Nabors, whom Obama had already tasked with helping sort out the VA, Obama said that the inspector general has launched investigations into the Phoenix VA and other VA facilities, and that anyone found to have manipulated records will be punished.

Nabors will meet with the heads of veterans service organizations in Phoenix on Thursday.

Gene Crego, Arizona state council president for Vietnam Veterans of America, said he was satisfied with Obama's statement, though "it took longer than what we were hoping for."

Crego said he agrees that there are many dedicated people in the VA system, but also knows the

See a timeline of VA Secretary Eric Shinseki's career, at [stripes.com/goshinsekitimeline](http://stripes.com/goshinsekitimeline)



long delays in getting an appointment is "something that's been happening for years," in part because there is not enough staff.

Obama said his administration has made progress by boosting funding, making VA benefits available to more veterans, and "launching an all-out war on the disability claims backlog."

Paul Rieckhoff, CEO of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, said the president's "long-overdue" remarks "were a tremendous disappointment" and "did nothing to quell the growing nationwide VA controversy."

The American Legion and several members of Congress have called for Shinseki to resign because of the allegations, but Obama on Wednesday called Shinseki "a great soldier."

"Nobody cares more about our veterans than Ric Shinseki," Obama said. "He has put his heart and soul into this thing and he has taken it very seriously ... At this stage, [Shinseki] is committed to solving the problem and working with us to do it."

Richardson and Crego said they think keeping Shinseki in

place, at least for now, is the best decision.

"It makes no sense to get rid of him," Richardson said. "At least he's committed to helping the vets. He just needs the tools and the authority to do it."

But American Legion National Commander Daniel Dellinger said the decision to keep Shinseki is "an unfortunate one."

"The VA, has been aware for some time that inappropriate scheduling procedures are widespread among its medical facilities," Dellinger said. "Yet Secretary Shinseki has taken no initiative in correcting the problem. Veterans continue to die waiting for their health care, senior VA executives continue to get their bonuses, and only after all of this is the secretary now pledging to fix what's wrong."

A 2010 VA memo obtained by the American Legion shows that officials were aware of "gaming strategies" to meet performance measures.

Dr. Samuel Foote, one of the whistleblowers in the Phoenix VA case, first wrote a letter to the inspector general alleging secret waiting lists in late October 2013.

Foote, who retired from the VA in 2013 after more than 23 years, told Stars and Stripes he had known about the waiting lists earlier that year, after a clerk told him they weren't allowed to make new patient appointments, but he didn't know until late August that some patients on the list had died while waiting for an appointment.

## House OKs wider power to fire senior management

By TRAVIS J. TRITTEN  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The House passed a bill Wednesday that would give Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki new power to fire and demote senior executives in the troubled department.

The vote came just hours after President Barack Obama spoke about the health care scandal involving patient deaths and possible VA misconduct across the country.

The bill takes aim at VA management by allowing the secretary to fire executives without administrative due process. Opponents in the House called it a knee-jerk reaction that would politicize executives and do little to solve deep problems with access at the agency.

Congress intensified calls this week for quick and decisive changes at the VA as allegations of an off-the-books waiting list that might have led to the deaths of 40 veterans at a Phoenix clinic snowballed into a national scandal.

Allegations of wrongdoing have surfaced at facilities in at least 10 states.

Amid growing public frustration, Obama called the embattled secretary to the White House on Wednesday, pledging support as the VA inspector general conducts an investigation and vowing to hold employees accountable for any uncovered wrongdoing.

Also attending was White House Deputy Chief of Staff Rob Nabors, who last week was assigned to review VA operations nationwide.

Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla., who sponsored the VA bill, said he was deeply disappointed by Obama's reaction to what he called the biggest scandal in VA's history.

"The best way to reform the VA is to get rid of the dead wood," Miller said.

SEE POWER ON PAGE 9

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SEE OBAMA ON PAGE 9



## VA ALLEGATIONS



CLIFF OWEN/AP

**Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki listens to a reporter's questions on Capitol Hill in Washington on Thursday after testifying before the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee.**

# House panel to VA officials: Appear or face subpoenas

By TRAVIS J. TRITTEN  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — House lawmakers on Thursday told Department of Veterans Affairs executives to appear May 28 on Capitol Hill or face subpoenas, saying the department has failed for weeks to fully comply with an inquiry into allegations of falsified documents and dozens of veteran deaths at a Phoenix hospital.

On Wednesday evening, VA executives were told to appear Thursday morning at a House Veterans Affairs Committee meeting to explain why requested documents have not been supplied, but told frustrated lawmakers they could not attend.

Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla., chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee, said members would issue subpoenas if the VA does not provide testimony next week by the deputy undersecretary for health and clinical operations, assistant secretary for congressional affairs and a congressional relations officer.

A whistleblower has alleged a Phoenix VA hospital had an off-the-books waiting list that might have led to 40 patient deaths, and similar reports have surfaced in at least 10 other states.

Miller said the VA has not been forthcoming despite a May 8 subpoena of 27 employees for documents related to the Phoenix allegations and an earlier admission that a secret waiting list was kept to conceal long wait times.

"It is not very hard in this day and age to give us the info we are asking for ... search through the emails," he said.

Still, the department provided 201 emails in a "rolling block" of info and another 3,000 documents in the early morning hours before the Thursday committee hearing, Miller said.

That has not been good enough for committee members.

"It is unbelievable to me that

you could not get those emails done in a few hours," Rep. David Roe, R-Tenn., said. "We are losing the trust of our veterans ... we are about to blow it up right here on Memorial Day weekend."

The House push comes after calls from members of Congress and veterans' groups for Shinseki to resign.

On Wednesday, amid the growing pressure, President Barack Obama called the embattled secretary to the White House for a meeting with Deputy Chief of Staff Rob Nabors, who has been called in to help oversee a department review following the scandal.

Late Wednesday, the House overwhelming passed a bill designed to put more pressure on VA management by giving VA Secretary Eric Shinseki wider power to fire and demote senior executives in the wake of the agency's nationwide scandal over patient wait times and related deaths at its facilities.

Obama, who has also drawn fire from congressional Republicans for his handling of the VA, pledged to support Shinseki while the VA inspector general conducts an investigation that is due in August.

House Speaker Rep. John Boehner, R-Ohio, backed the veterans' affairs committee push Thursday, saying he also believes the agency has balked at providing documents called for earlier this month.

"The fact is, they have not complied with the subpoena," Boehner said during a press conference following the morning hearing.

The speaker said he is moving closer to a call for Shinseki's resignation given new allegations of VA misconduct in his Ohio district, but said it would do nothing to solve deep, systemic problems within the agency.

"This isn't about one person," he said. "It is about the entire system underneath him."

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## Power: Proposed house bill would give VA power to quickly remove executives

FROM PAGE 8

His bill would strip away the existing administrative process currently needed to remove or demote federal senior executives who work at the agency, meaning Shinseki alone could decide what merits termination instead of performance reviews required by federal law.

Miller said "it is easier for someone to get a bonus than it is to get some type of discipline" at the VA and that has led to gross negligence and incompetence throughout the agency.

The House bill would give the secretary the power he needs to quickly remove problematic senior executives and restore public confidence, he said.

Other House lawmakers said they were frustrated by perceived inaction by the VA and White House.

"In the real world, you get fired if you fail to do your job. Not in the VA," said Rep. Dan Benishek, R-Mich. "I'm sick and tired of haul-

**'In the real world, you get fired if you fail to do your job. Not in the VA.'**

Rep. Dan Benishek  
R-Mich.

ing VA officials in front to the [House Veterans Affairs] committee to hear tired excuses."

Similar legislation sponsored by Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., has been introduced in the Senate.

Shinseki has said he does not need the new authority — the agency fired 3,000 employees last year — and senior executive employees urged Congress to reject the proposal this week.

Federal law requires that senior executives be fired if they receive two unsatisfactory performance ratings in five years or two less than totally successful ratings in three years, according to the Senior Executives Association, a trade group representing federal managers. But the VA already has

the authority to fire a senior executive after one unsatisfactory performance review, the group wrote in a May 20 letter to Congress opposing the Miller bill.

Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Md., also opposed the legislation, saying it would break down an administrative wall designed to protect senior federal executives from being fired at will by presidential political appointees, such as Shinseki.

"All of us are outraged at the allegations that have been made, but that's not what this legislation is about," Hoyer said. "This legislation is about a knee-jerk reaction to a very bad situation painting with a very broad brush."

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## Obama: Records show thousands of dollars spent on gardening, interior design while patients waited

FROM PAGE 8

In the meantime, he said, Sharon Helman, the director of the Phoenix VA Health Care System, received a \$9,345 bonus in 2013 for reducing the time it took for patients to get return and follow-up appointments from almost a year to an average of two weeks, even though 13,000 patients were still without primary care providers, Foote said.

"What's the return wait time when you don't have a provider?" he said. "It's infinity ... not something to be proud of."

Teams that met the "wildly important goals" set out by Helman — who has since been put in administrative leave — were rewarded with pizza, Foote said.

"We all celebrated, though later we found out we were celebrating the deaths of several people," he said.

A July 2012 email exchange reported by the Arizona Republic shows that Helman and other officials were aware then that the data was misleading.

Damian Reese, a program analyst, had written: "I think it's unfair to call any of this a success when veterans are waiting six weeks on an electronic waiting list before they're called to schedule their first [primary care] appointment. Sure, when their appointment was created, [it] can be 14 days out, but we're making them wait 6-20 weeks to create that appointment. That is unethical and a disservice to our veterans," according to the

Arizona Republic.

Records obtained by Fox News show that more than \$843,000 in bonuses was awarded to about half the system's 3,170 workers from 2011 to 2013, and that the hospital spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on gardening and interior design while patients in the emergency room waited hours for care.

Dellinger said that now, veterans are again being told to wait for things to get better.

"Words are nice, and even somewhat comforting," he said, "but when will the VA's house be cleansed of those who are soiling it and dishonoring the system?"

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## PACIFIC



Courtesy of Camp Humphreys

New construction at Camp Humphreys, South Korea, includes about 500 projects and more than 1,000 buildings.

## Humphreys: Expansion project showing progress after years of delays

### FROM FRONT PAGE

A shortage of off-post housing for the thousands of troops and civilians projected to move to the area also could potentially slow the relocation, though the military says Korean developers are expected to fill the gap now that they see the long-delayed project is finally moving forward.

Humphreys is the centerpiece of the military's plan to close dozens of U.S. bases in and north of Seoul, allowing the U.S. to consolidate its presence into regional hubs in Pyeongtaek and Daegu. The \$10 billion-plus expansion of the former helicopter base includes about 500 projects and construction of more than 1,000 buildings.

Last year, U.S. Forces Korea and South Korea's Ministry of National Defense Relocation Office told Stars and Stripes that 53 percent of the expansion had been completed as of May 2013, much more than what Hammack had indicated. USFK said the rest would be finished at a pace of about 15 percent each year with the exception of minor projects such as landscaping.

USFK did not provide an explanation for the discrepancy with Hammack's figures.

The relocation has faced multiple delays due to funding and construction problems. The move was initially scheduled to take place in 2008, but was postponed until 2012 and then to 2016.

Hammack said readily the site for construction has proved to be the most difficult part of the expansion but is nearly completed. Flooding required extensive landfill, plaguing the early years

of the project.

"Most of the area is currently rice fields, right along a river," USFK told Stars and Stripes in 2006. "Rice fields are designed to flood. The rice fields must be filled in, just as is done all over Korea when new towns are built."

### More housing needed

An additional 8,000 USFK-affiliated personnel, including military, civilians, contractors and retirees, are expected to move to the Humphreys area by the end of 2017.

Of those, about 1,100 are expected to be housed on post, and the military believes it is 30 percent to 50 percent short of its projected need for off-post housing for 2017.

"Because the move to Humphreys has taken longer than initially conceived, part of this plan is both Gen. (Curtis) Scaparotti and myself explaining that we are committed to a 2017 end state move, so the pieces will need to be in place in '16, and here we are in '14, so it's a fairly narrow window," Hammack said.

Several Korean industries are also planning to open facilities in the area, she said, putting even more of a squeeze on the housing market.

Despite the current lack of supply, Hammack said interest among Korean developers in building rentals for USFK appears to be high.

While at Humphreys, she met with 200 South Korean developers, real estate professionals and local government officials at a forum to explain USFK's requirements for off-post housing. Inter-



ARMANDO R. LIMON/Stars and Stripes

The frame of the new troop chapel, foreground, is visible on May 8, with additional barracks under construction in the background at Camp Humphreys.

est was so high that attendance was capped.

Under the military's Rental Partnership Program, housing that has yet to be built can essentially be pre-certified for rental to U.S. troops and government civilians if the landlord agrees to comply with the military's building requirements.

The military wants troops to live within a 30-minute drive of the base. Most will be stationed at Humphreys on relatively short tours of nine months or one to two years, Hammack said.

"They (Korean developers) heard the message," Hammack said. "One of the challenges is they want financial guarantees, and that's not something we will give. We're not going to be buying off-post housing, we're not going to be contracting for long-term leases."

Scaparotti, the USFK commander, spoke at the forum, which was closed to media. The command would not release a transcript of his remarks, say-

ing the forum was "just for the Korean businesses and leaders to talk with USFK and Army leadership."

### More work to be done

Meeting target dates also could depend on the unexpected.

The military has yet to release a full list of the problems that delayed the opening of Humphreys High School last August by a semester. According to a source with knowledge of the project, many of the deficiencies, including installation of fire detectors in refrigerators, were caused by translation problems between the U.S. military and the South Korean contractor.

Additionally, the U.S. military failed to detect some mistakes during a pre-construction review of Samsung C&T Corp.'s design plans.

Asked about the problems, Hammack said there was "an extensive punchlist of things that needed to be completed" as is typ-

ical for any construction project.

"I think that anytime you take on a project this big, there are going to be hiccups that occur along the way, and the school was a great testing ground for all of the details that need to be ironed out ... and to tighten up the teaming that it's going to take in order to ensure the base is complete and ready on time," she said.

Hammack said that as Humphreys construction approaches the end state, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been asked to increase its oversight of the project.

"My understanding is there are now weekly reviews of each of the projects to ensure that we don't have balls that are dropped or confusion, and that things are clarified ahead of time," she said.

She said the U.S. military's budget-tightening won't affect the relocation. "Even though budget impacts are affecting our operations in many locations, there's a firm commitment here."

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## PACIFIC

# Student a suspect in Kadena sex assault case

By MATTHEW M. BURKE

*Stars and Stripes*

**CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa** — For the second time in as many weeks, a suspected sexual assault has come to light involving high school students on Kadena Air Base in Okinawa.

The incident allegedly happened at Kadena High School on Monday and involved two students, according to DODEA-Pacific schools spokesman Charly Hoff. Administrators received the complaint the following day.

Hoff declined to provide fur-

ther information regarding the circumstances due to privacy concerns. The case has been handed over to Okinawan prefectural police, who are investigating.

Okinawan officials had no further information.

"We're cooperating fully with law enforcement," Hoff said. "We've taken all the appropriate actions we can pending the results of an investigation."

Word of the suspected assault comes a week after Kadena High School student, Ricky Isaiah Sherwood, 18, was indicted in federal

court on charges that he raped a heavily intoxicated 17-year-old classmate in front of other students and captured the incident on a cellphone video.

Sherwood was charged in District Court in Minnesota with sexual abuse, production of child pornography and possession of child pornography, according to the Justice Department. That incident is suspected to have taken place in early February at the Kadena Air Base home of his legal guardian and uncle, a Marine Corps staff sergeant.

Sherwood is being tried in

federal court because under the Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act, federal courts have jurisdiction over felonies committed abroad by individuals employed by — or accompanying — the U.S. military. The act applies to an offense punishable by more than one year in prison.

Air Force officials at Kadena declined to provide details of the case. However, they said that incidents regarding dependents of Status of Forces Agreement personnel fall under Japanese Jurisdiction. The parties involved have the option to report the incident to

the U.S. military or to Japanese law enforcement, which was done in this case.

Following the previous incident, students at Kadena High School were given military Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Training that had been modified for them, school officials have said.

"The incident is under investigation; however, we have no reason to believe it is part of a trend," an Air Force spokesman said of the most recent case.

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COURTESY OF ONGUN COUNTY, SOUTH KOREA/AP

**Residents of South Korea's Yeonpyeong Island rest Thursday after evacuating to a shelter on an island near the West Sea border with North Korea.**

## Koreas trade fire near disputed boundary

By HYUNG-JIN KIM

*The Associated Press*

**SEOUL, South Korea** — North and South Korean warships exchanged artillery fire Thursday in disputed waters off the western coast, South Korean military officials said, in the latest sign of rising animosity between the bitter rivals in recent weeks.

Officials from the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff and Defense Ministry said a South Korean navy ship was engaged in a routine patrol near the countries' disputed maritime boundary in the Yellow Sea when a North Korean navy ship fired two artillery shells. The shells did not hit the South Korean ship and fell into water near it, they said.

The South Korean ship then fired several artillery rounds into water near the North Korean ship, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity be-

cause of office rules.

South Korea was trying to determine if the North Korean ship had attempted to hit the South Korean vessel but missed or if the shells were not meant to hit the ship.

Officials said that residents on the front-line Yeonpyeong Island were evacuated to shelters, and fishing ships in the area were ordered to return to ports. In 2010, North Korea fired artillery at the island, killing two civilians and two marines.

Kang Myeong-sung, a Yeonpyeong resident, said in a phone interview that hundreds of residents were in underground shelters there. He heard the sound of artillery fire and said many people felt uneasy at first, but later began to stop worrying.

Both Koreas regularly conduct artillery drills in the disputed waters. The sea boundary is not

clearly marked, and the area has been the scene of three bloody naval skirmishes between the rival Koreas since 1999.

North Korea has in recent weeks conducted a string of artillery drills and missile tests and has unleashed a torrent of racist and sexist rhetoric at the leaders of the U.S. and South Korea.

On Tuesday, South Korean navy ships fired warning shots to repel three North Korean warships that briefly violated the disputed sea boundary. On Wednesday, North Korea's military vowed to retaliate.

North Korean military ships and fishing boats have routinely intruded into South Korean-controlled waters that the North doesn't recognize. The Yellow Sea boundary was unilaterally drawn by the U.S.-led U.N. Command at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

## Japan's main party pushes combat role

By ERIK SLAVIN

*Stars and Stripes*

**YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan** — Japan's dominant political party officially began its push this week to convince its skeptical coalition partner that the country should allow its troops to defend U.S. forces in combat.

The Liberal Democratic Party opened talks with New Komeito on a host of changes that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has said will strengthen Japan's security.

New Komeito could conceivably cripple Abe's goal of reintering — without actually amending — Japan's pacifist constitution,

which Abe deems necessary for a plan that would allow Japanese forces to engage in collective self-defense with its closest allies.

Abe's desired first step is an unopposed Cabinet resolution, which would require a New Komeito official to agree, or at least to abstain.

After months of internal debate, New Komeito hasn't signed on to the collective self-defense plan. It doesn't appear likely to do so now, especially after the Soka Gakkai Buddhist organization, the party's key backer, voiced its opposition in a statement May 17.

A strong New Komeito protest could gain support from much of the Japanese public, which polls show agrees with some of Abe's ideas on security but opposes his legal methods. However, recent statements by New Komeito leaders indicate the party may offer only symbolic resistance.

On Monday, New Komeito leader Natsuo Yamaguchi criticized the government's position, ending the ban on collective self-defense as "very abstract and vague," Jiji Press reported from a members-only meeting at the Research Institute of Japan. He went on to deny his party would leave the LDP ruling coalition over any disagreement on the issue.

Without the threat of weakening his governing majority, Abe faces little chance of failure.

The current talks between the LDP and New Komeito amount to political theater, said Jeff Kingston, director of Asian Studies at Temple University's Japan

campus.

"Abe is desperately trying to demonstrate that he is consulting various groups," Kingston said. "He's moving in a slow and deliberate manner, he's not going to shove it down the country's throat the way he did on the [official secrecy] law, which proved extremely unpopular."

Kingston said Abe could make a valid public argument for increasing Japan's role in regional and international security operations, as well as for a broader U.S.-Japan security alliance. However, Japan's constitution offers a clear method for change, and Abe isn't following it, he said.

A constitutional amendment requires a two-thirds majority in both legislative houses, which most analysts agree the government can't pull off. On May 15, a government panel of legal experts issued a report arguing otherwise. It laid the groundwork for a reinterpretation, relying on close examination of the constitution's verbiage, supreme court decisions from the 1950s and other precedents.

Abe and many on Japan's political right have long disagreed with the current interpretation banning collective self-defense. Soon after the LDP was swept back into power during 2012 elections, Abe began citing tensions in North Korea and Japan's close ties with China as evidence of the need for change.

The United States appears less concerned with Abe's methods and more interested in broadening its defense options with a key ally in the Asia-Pacific region, which President Barack Obama has identified as America's top long-term priority in foreign affairs. During separate visits to Japan this year, Obama and Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel each endorsed Japanese consideration of collective self-defense.

"The important coalition partner the [LDP] consulted was the United States," Kingston said. "What's more important, making New Komeito happy, or making Washington happy? It's obvious."

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## NATION



M. SPENCER GREEN/AP

Hundreds of workers, organizers and supporters gather Thursday outside a McDonald's Corp. building in Oak Brook, Ill., to demonstrate in favor of a \$15-per-hour wage and the right to unionize.

## McDonald's to face critics at annual shareholders meeting

By CANDICE CHOI  
AND TAMMY WEBBER  
The Associated Press

OAK BROOK, Ill. — McDonald's is set to face criticism on issues including worker pay and marketing to children at its shareholders meeting Thursday morning.

Critics plan to confront CEO Don Thompson during the question-and-answer portion of the annual event. Already on Wednesday, McDonald's closed one of its buildings in Oak Brook, Ill., where hundreds of protesters had planned to demonstrate over the low wages paid to its workers.

Protesters targeted another site on the company's headquarters in suburban Chicago, and more than

138 were arrested for refusing to leave the property.

The protesters were out again before the meeting was set to begin Thursday, chanting "I want, I want, I want my \$15."

Shawn Dalton, 59, traveled from Pittsburgh, saying she wanted to support fast-food and minimum-wage workers. Dalton said her daughter is a recent high school graduate who can't afford to go to college right away, so she'll likely wind up earning Pennsylvania's \$7.25-per-hour minimum wage.

Inside the meeting, individuals affiliated with Corporate Accountability intended to once again bring up the company's marketing to children. Last year, the group made headlines after it

arranged to have a 9-year-old girl ask Thompson to stop "tricking" kids into eating McDonald's food.

McDonald's representatives didn't immediately respond when asked if they planned to change the way it conducts its question-and-answer period this year. In past years, people have been able to stand and directly address executives.

Shareholder meetings offer a rare opportunity for average investors to face top executives at publicly traded companies. Public pension funds and activist groups often show up in hopes of changing corporate practices.

The McDonald's meeting is a frequent target because of the company's high profile.

## Police describe woman's decade held in captivity

By GILLIAN FLACCUS  
AND TAMI ABDOLAH  
The Associated Press

SANTA ANA, Calif. — A woman who says she was abducted in California a decade ago by a man who forced her to marry him and who fathered her child said in a television interview that she's happy and blessed to be back with her family.

Police described a decade during which the now-25-year-old woman — abused mentally, physically and sexually by her captor — was moved at least four times and was given multiple fake identities to hide her from family and authorities.

The woman, who wasn't identified, said she often thought about escaping but was fearful of her abductor.

"I was very afraid about everything because I was alone," she told KABC-TV in an interview that aired Wednesday night.

Isidro Garcia, 41, of the Los Angeles suburb of Bell Gardens, was arrested on suspicion of kidnapping for rape, lewd acts with a minor and false imprisonment, the Santa Ana Police Department said.

His accuser — who came forward to police on Monday after finding her sister on Facebook — told the station that her neighbors believed her captor was a good man because he worked hard.



Garcia

"He worked hard for me and my daughter and he bought everything I want. But I didn't want that," she said with her mother, sister and daughter at her side. "I need love from my family, not things."

KABC-TV didn't identify the woman because is a victim of sexual abuse. The station had interviewed the woman's mother when she was missing 10 years ago.

Santa Ana police Cpl. Anthony Bertagna said his department's investigation concluded the following:

The girl arrived from Mexico in February 2004 to join her mother and sister in Santa Ana, about 30 miles southeast of downtown Los Angeles. She had entered the United States illegally and spoke no English.

Garcia was her mother's boyfriend. After one fight between the girl's mother and Garcia in August 2004, the girl's mother left the house and the girl went to a nearby park.

Garcia followed the girl. When he caught up with her, she said she had a headache and wanted to go home.

Garcia began threatening the girl.

"He told her then, 'You can't go home. You're here illegally, you don't speak the language, your mom's called the police, they will send you back. I'm your only hope,'" Bertagna said.

Garcia gave her five pills that he said would help her headache but instead knocked her out. When the girl awoke, she was locked in a garage in Compton, a city between Santa Ana and Los Angeles.

## House Democrats to participate in Benghazi investigation

By DONNA CASSATA  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Democrats will participate in the special, Republican-led select committee investigating the deadly 2012 attack in Benghazi, Libya, despite serious concerns within the party that the inquiry is an election-year ploy to energize core GOP voters.

Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi announced on Wednesday that she will appoint the full complement of five Democrats on the 12-member panel, tapping lawmakers who have been deeply involved in previous congressional investigations of the Sept. 11, 2012, assault on the U.S. diplomatic outpost.

Four Americans, including U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens, died in the attack when militants stormed the mission. Republicans have accused the Obama administration of misleading Americans about a terrorist attack weeks before the presidential election.

"I believe we need someone in that room to simply defend the truth," Rep. Elijah Cummings, of Maryland, the top Democrat on the Oversight panel, told reporters at a Capitol Hill news conference.

Cummings will serve as the ranking member on the select committee. Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, had selected Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C., a seasoned prosecutor, to be the panel's

chairman along with six other Republicans.

Democrats who also will participate are Adam Smith, of Washington state, the top Democrat on the Armed Services panel; Adam Schiff, of California, a member of the Intelligence Committee; Linda Sanchez, also of California, who is on Ways and Means' oversight subcommittee; and Tammy Duckworth, of Illinois, who serves on Armed Services.

Democrats have been divided over whether to boycott the investigation, the eighth probe. Some Democrats have called the new inquiry a political sham designed to embarrass the Obama administration and to rough up former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, a potential 2016

presidential candidate.

Among Democratic leaders, Rep. Jim Clyburn, of South Carolina, reiterated his reservations on Tuesday. Clyburn had said, "If you're going to have a hanging, don't ask me to bring the noose."

Pelosi said she "could have argued this either way. Why give any validity to this effort?"

Other Democrats have maintained that they must participate in the select committee to ensure they have a role in questioning witnesses.

"We can't simply let the Republicans run the show," Smith said.

Cummings said the select committee is unnecessary "because many of the so-called unanswered questions" have been answered

in previous reports.

In a statement, Gowdy said he looked forward to working with committee members "toward an investigation and a process worthy of the American people and the four brave Americans who lost their lives in service to our country."

At the White House, spokesman Jay Carney said there was some common ground "toward House GOP's investigation 'might not be divorced from politics.'"

"Our view has always been — and it has been not just our view, but our practice — that it is appropriate to have legitimate congressional oversight," Carney added, without elaborating on whether the GOP-led investigation constitutes legitimate oversight.

## NATION



## STROKE OF HEALING

### Prosthetic arm allows injured Afghan girl to pursue joy of art

By JOHN ROGERS  
The Associated Press

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — She had always loved to paint and draw, something it appeared the little girl from Afghanistan might never do again after she mistakenly picked up a grenade outside her war-torn home last year and it blew off much of her right arm.

But with the help of doctors, prosthetists and a prominent Los Angeles artist, Shah Bibi Tarakhail, 7, dispelled any notion that something as ugly as war can stifle a small child's determination to add beauty to the world.

"What color would you like?" asked artist Davyd Whaley as he sat next to her at a table at the Galerie Michael on Rodeo Drive in the heart of Beverly Hills on Wednesday afternoon.

"That one!" the normally reticent girl responded with a firm voice as she pointed to a tube of blue acrylic. Then, before her mentor could fetch it, she grabbed it with her new prosthetic hand, unscrewed the top with her other hand and began squeezing the tube's contents onto a palette.



PHOTOS BY DEMIAN DOVARGANES/AP

**Shah Bibi Tarakhail smiles as she holds her painting with artist Davyd Whaley, right, at Galerie Michael in Beverly Hills, Calif.**

As her friends from the nonprofit Children of War Foundation and the Shriners Hospital for Children Los Angeles looked on with delight, Shah Bibi proceeded to put a series of broad brush strokes across a piece of art board she giggled with embarrassment as she

At one point she giggled with embarrassment as she accidentally squeezed a tube of orange paint onto the painting rather than the palette. But Whaley quickly assured her that accidental art sometimes makes the best abstract art.

"You're going to do a Jackson Pollock," he quipped. The finished result, the artist said afterward, "was pretty mind-blowing."

Shah Bibi, he said, not only handles a brush well but has an impressive grasp of matching colors. "She kind of has a facility for it if she wants to pursue it," added the artist whose own work is the subject of a large exhibition on display at Galerie Michael, where Shah Bibi was invited to join him after gallery owners learned of her love of art.

Less than a year ago, she was at home in Afghanistan when she went outside one morning to play with her brother. There had been a violent battle pitting Taliban fighters against U.S. military forces the night before, but that was nothing residents weren't used to. Their village had been a cauldron of violence since the Afghan War began.

There was what looked like a rock that she picked up and threw on the ground and it exploded," said Ilaha Omar, a Children of War Foundation member who brought her to the United States, where Shriners Hospital treated her for free.

The explosion had destroyed her right eye, taken off most of her right arm, put a few scars on her face and killed her brother.

She returned to her family in Afghanistan recently, but Children of War plans to bring her back next year to fit her with a prosthetic eye and attend to her scars. As the afternoon grew longer and the gallery crowd thinned, Whaley asked if she might like to do another painting.

"Yes!" came the exuberant reply. And the pair got back to work.

## WORLD

## Scores killed, wounded during attack in China

By DIDI TANG

The Associated Press

URUMQI, China — Attackers hurled bombs from two SUVs that plowed through shoppers at a busy street market in China's volatile northwestern region of Xinjiang on Thursday, killing 31 people and wounding more than 90, local officials said.

It was not immediately clear who was responsible nor how many assailants took part, but the attack in the city of Urumqi was the bloodiest in a series of violent incidents in recent months that Chinese authorities have blamed on radical separatists from the country's Muslim Uighur minority.

The Xinjiang region is home to the native Turkic-speaking Uighurs but has seen large inflows from China's ethnic Han majority in recent decades. Uighur activists contend that restrictive and discriminatory policies favoring the Chinese migrants are fueling the bloodshed. The knowledge that Muslims elsewhere are rising up against their governments also seems to be contributing to

the increased militancy.

The Xinjiang regional government said in a statement that the early-morning attack was "a serious violent terrorist incident of a particularly vile nature."

The two vehicles crashed through barriers at 7:50 a.m. and drove right into the crowds while setting off explosives, the statement said.

The SUVs then crashed head-on and one of them exploded, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. It quoted an eyewitness as saying there were up to a dozen blasts in all and that at one point, one of the vehicles stopped because it was blocked by bodies and handcars.

Photos from the scene posted to popular Chinese social media site Weibo showed at least three people lying in a street with a large fire in the distance giving off huge plumes of smoke. Others, many of them elderly people who frequent the early-morning market, were sitting in the roadway in shock, with vegetables, boxes and stools strewn around them.

## Islamist militias joining standoff in Libyan capital

By ESAM MOHAMED

The Associated Press

TRIPOLI, Libya — Islamist-led militias on Thursday streamed into the Libyan capital amid a standoff with fighters loyal to a renegade general whose offensive has won support from officials, diplomats and army units, but has also threatened to fragment the country further.

The militias, known as Libya Central Shield, comprise groups from the western city of Misrata. They are under the command of the country's chief of staff, who answers to parliament. The Islamist-dominated legislature has described the campaign by

Gen. Khalifa Hifter as a coup.

Witnesses in Tripoli said they saw Misrata militiamen take positions early on Thursday in army barracks in the city's south, near the airport highway. The residents spoke on condition of anonymity, fearing for their own safety.

The parliament — challenged by its own government, which is pressing for a suspension of the house's sessions until new elections — has called in the forces to face off pro-Hifter militias in the capital.

No fighting was reported on Thursday but dozens of people have been killed since Hifter's offensive began last Friday.



SANCHAI LALIT/AP

Thai soldiers stand guard in front of the Democracy Monument after a coup Thursday in Bangkok, Thailand.

## Thai military seizes power in coup, imposes curfew

By THANYARAT DOKSONE

AND JOCELYN GECKER

The Associated Press

BANGKOK — Thailand's military seized power Thursday in a bloodless coup, dissolving the government, suspending the constitution and dispersing groups of protesters from both sides of the country's political divide who had gathered in Bangkok and raised fears of a violent showdown.

The powerful army chief, Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha, announced the military takeover in a statement broadcast on national television. It was followed by additional announcements including a nationwide curfew from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. and an order for 18 government officials — including the ousted prime minister — to report immediately to the

country's new governing military commission.

There was no immediate sign of soldiers patrolling central Bangkok, but troops dispersed the two protest sites where competing groups were camped out — one backing the now-ousted elected government and one that had struggled for seven months to unseat it.

Although the military has insisted it wasn't taking sides, its ousting of the elected government met the key goal of the anti-government protesters. The pro-government "Red Shirt" supporters earlier had said they would not tolerate a coup, but there were no immediate signs of resistance or reports of violence. The military provided hundreds of buses to take the protesters home.

Long lines formed at the city's

elevated train, subway stations and bus stations as panicked office workers tried to rush home before the curfew.

Planked by the heads of the armed forces, Prayuth said the coup was launched "to quickly bring the situation back to normal, to let the people have love and unity as in the past, and to reform the political and economic systems — and to grant equality to every side."

An army spokesman later announced that it had dissolved the caretaker government and suspended the constitution but that the Senate would remain in place. It also ordered the suspension of all television broadcasting and replaced programming with patriotic music to fill air time between announcements.

## Syria troops break prison siege in Aleppo

By BASSEM MROUE

The Associated Press

BEIRUT — Syrian troops backed by airstrikes broke a yearlong rebel siege of a prison in the northern city of Aleppo on Thursday, allowing President Bashar Assad's forces to close in on a nearby command center of a coalition of Islamist rebel groups, opposition activists said.

The sprawling prison has witnessed deadly clashes between government and opposition forces for the past year. Rebels repeatedly have barreled suicide car bombs into the front gates and fought guards and troops holed up inside, seeking to free an estimated 4,000 inmates.

Aleppo has been carved into rebel- and government-controlled areas since opposition fighters launched an offensive in Syria's largest city in mid-2012. The Syrian army has made gains in the center of the country and is seeking to advance against opposition-held areas in the north ahead of next month's presidential election.

It would take a monumental army push to take back the entire city, and it is very unlikely to happen before the June 3 vote. But the army advances are a sign that the momentum in the city may be starting to shift decisively in favor of the government.

The reward is twofold for Assad: The more territory he can

claw back, the more places he can potentially hold baiting. Syrian officials have said voting will only take place in government-controlled territory.

Battlefield gains in Aleppo will also give Assad more reason to claim he is winning, and portray himself as the only one capable of restoring security to the country.

Activists say more than 160,000 people have been killed since the Syrian conflict started in March 2011 as largely peaceful protests against Assad's rule that deteriorated into civil war. The fighting has also uprooted 9 million people, with over 6 million Syrians seeking shelter in safer parts of the country and at least 2.7 million fleeing to neighboring countries.



AP

A doctor treats a Syrian man Wednesday at a charity clinic in the northern port city of Tripoli, Lebanon.





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## FAITH



MARCO DI LAURO/AP

A priest reads the Bible earlier this month in Rome during a break at a Vatican-sponsored conference on exorcism, which was attended by 200 delegates, most of them priests and nuns, from more than two dozen nations.

# Exorcist treats a disease ‘of the soul’

By ANTHONY FAIOLA  
The Washington Post

**T**he den of the Catholic Church's best-known exorcist is an unassuming place, a small third-floor room in a home for aging priests hidden in an obscure corner of southern Rome. I walk down the hospital-like hallway on my way to meet him, and the priest anticipates my knock before it happens. The door swings open, and there he is.

The Rev. Gabriele Amorth, 89, peers up with goldfish eyes through his Hubble-telescope glasses.

"Enter," says the diminutive priest.

I obey.

The room is stark, fitted out with a hospital bed and numerous images of Jesus and the Virgin Mary. Then there are the mementos, which Amorth began collecting after he was appointed as an exorcist back in the 1980s.

He has conducted thousands of spiritual cleansings since then, keeping just a few of the bits and bobs he likes to call "the stuff that gets spewed from mouths." Nails. Keys. Chains. Plastic figurines.

"What seems to be spit turns out to be a nail," he said with a seen-it-all tone. "I don't give it much importance."

His services, though still in great demand, are not always needed. "Most times there's no actual diabolical presence, and my job lies in suggesting



A leaflet that reads "Vade Retro" ("Go back" or "Step back, Satan") is seen at the conference.

those that come to me to live a life of faith and prayer," he said. "And this is enough to assuage the fears of those afraid of the Devil's ills."

Other times, he said, "there really is a diabolical influence."

"Twice, Amorth claims, he saw possessed victims levitate.

"We try to keep the person in the armchair," he said, adding that demons "do it just to show off."

An hour later, he invites me and an Italian colleague to witness an exorcism ourselves.

His exorcism room is a retrofitted, white-tiled kitchen on the first floor of the residence decorated with more images of Jesus and Mary.

Before launching into combat with the Beast, Amorth dons a black cassock and a purple sash and speaks a few words of consolation to the 40-something Neapolitan housewife before him. With her well-coiffed hair, sparkly sneakers and Bulgari sunglasses, the woman, who gave her name only as Antonella, seems perfectly normal at first.

That will change.

Unlike the speedy rituals shown in the movies, real exorcisms are more of a slow burn, often involving years of repeated rites before the big cleanse. Antonella, who drove up to Rome from Naples with her husband, Michele, for her latest exorcism, claims to have been possessed by multiple demons for the better part of 17 years.

Both she and Michele blame the affliction on a curse by a devil-worshipping, childless friend who they say envied Antonella's fecundity as a mother of two. They knew something was wrong, they said, when Antonella began throwing violent fits after receiving the Eucharist at Mass and going into trances in which she spoke Aramaic and German - languages she said she has never studied. It would typically take, three grown men to subdue her, the couple said.

After four years of exorcisms with Amorth, however, her fits have grown progressively less violent. She said she has begun to view the process as a long-term treatment of a terrible disease.

"But one of the soul," she said.

After a round of praying, Amorth, aided by three assistants, finally launches his spiritual attack.

He begins chanting in Latin, commanding the presumed devils inside Antonella to reveal themselves. Several minutes pass before Antonella reacts. She begins choking, coughing up phlegm. She moans, and rocks back and forth. As if in pain, she demands that the chanting stop.

Amorth refuses, shouting, "Tell me your name!"

Antonella writhes in her seat, hissing "No! No!" She shakes her head, her eyes rolling to the back of her head. In an altered voice, she says, "I will not!"

"Tell me your name!" Amorth repeats, until finally she spits out a name: Asmodeus, a demon from scriptural lore.

"How many are you!" the priest demands, repeating the question as she grunts and shakes her head violently.

Finally, she responds defiantly, "We are five!"

Amorth begins making the sign of the cross on her forehead, prompting her to recoil. The chanting and blessings go on for several more minutes before Antonella calms down. Soon, she comes around as if from a dream. She opens her eyes and slumps in her chair.

After his bout with the demons, Amorth simply shrugs.

"That," he said, "was a light one."

## WORLD

# In flood-ravaged Balkans, families look for lost pets

By JOVANA GEC  
The Associated Press

BELGRADE, Serbia — When the floods came, Danijel Mitevski was separated from his family, and it took him two days to rejoin his wife and daughter in a shelter. But the resident of Serbia's flood-hit town of Obrenovac wouldn't rest until his family was complete.

For five long days, Mitevski, 30, didn't know what had happened to the family pet, a cheerful 18-month-old mongrel named Gavra, whom they had to leave behind in a cousin's flat. Mitevski returned three times to the soaked town before he finally managed to reach the dog after walking 3 miles.

"Gavra didn't recognize me at first," Mitevski said Thursday. "But, when he did, he cried like a child."

The Mitevski family is among hundreds of thousands of people who have been forced out of their

homes in the epic Balkan floods, which hit large parts of Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia last week, drowning entire villages and towns. At least 50 people have died.

Fleeing in panic, in packed boats and trucks, many owners could not bring their animals along. On flooded farms, thousands of livestock have drowned inside barns and stables, with officials warning that tons of dead animals must be destroyed before they pose a health hazard.

But efforts also have been underway to rescue any animals that survived the calamity, and reunite them with their owners.

In Serbia, a website has been set up offering description of the pets, now staying temporarily with other people or in dog shelters. Dozens of animal videos and photos have been posted on social networks.



DARKO VOJNOVIC/AP

**Dogs from flood-hit Obrenovac are in a shelter Thursday in Belgrade, Serbia. In Serbia, a website has been set up to connect residents fleeing epic flooding with the pets they had to leave behind.**

In Obrenovac, volunteers have set up a network of their own to feed and rescue abandoned animals, which can be seen roaming the streets, looking for food amid the debris. One of the volunteers is Ivan Munitlak, 27, who drives back to Obrenovac daily from the capital Belgrade to feed the dogs still stranded in the town.

"People call us to tell us where the dogs are and we go there," he said, loading bags of pet food into his car outside a Belgrade shelter hosting people with pets. Inside, dogs and cats are packed side-by-side with their owners on makeshift beds lining the walls.

An elderly couple from Obrenovac are there with Lea, a small

black-and-brown, sad-eyed mongrel. Lea, they said, is like another grandchild, so when they had to flee, the couple put her in one of the two bags they were allowed to take on the rescue boat.

"I could never look her in those eyes and leave her behind, never," said Milena Novakovic, 64. "Then, I would stay too."

## Iran arrests 'Happy' dancers after video release

The Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — An Internet video of six young Iranian men and women dancing to Pharrell Williams' "Happy" has led to their arrests, showing how far Tehran will go to halt what it deems to be decadent Western behavior — despite the views of its moderate president.

Criticism outside Iran was predictably swift Wednesday, with calls for freedom for the jailed youths zipping around social media. Williams tweeted: "It's beyond sad these kids were arrested for trying to spread happiness."

A tweet posted Wednesday evening on President Hassan Rouhani's account seemed to address the controversy, even if it stopped short of mentioning the video or the arrests directly. "(hash)Happiness is our people's right," it said. "We shouldn't be too hard on behaviors caused by joy."

The widely followed account appears to reflect Rouhani's positions. Iranian media in the past

quoted Rouhani as saying the account is authentic. At the same time, a senior Rouhani adviser said last year that the president had such an account only during the presidential campaign and that Rouhani's views are represented by his official website.

Other social media posts suggested at least some of the dancers had been released, although there was no independent confirmation from authorities.

The dancing Iranians would seem right at home in the West — or indeed in the music video that accompanies Williams' song.

The video, which was posted online several weeks ago, shows hip twentysomethings hamming it up for the camera in sunglasses and silly clothes on Tehran rooftops and alleyways.

None of the three women in the video wears a hijab.

Tehran Police Chief Hossein Sadeghi confirmed the arrests on state TV late Tuesday in a report that blurred images from the video.



AP

**In this YouTube frame grab, people dance to Pharrell Williams' hit song "Happy" on a rooftop in Tehran, Iran. Police in Iran have arrested six young people for posting the video.**

## French mass DNA test does not find rapist

PARIS — French authorities say that mass DNA testing of the entire male population of a French high school failed to find the assailant who raped a teenage girl on the closed campus.

The mass test last month at the Fenelon-Notre Dame high school in western France raised concerns about privacy rights, especially for children. Boys as young as 14 were among those tested. No one refused to participate.

The La Rochelle prosecutor's office said in a statement Thursday that the DNA samples from 539 students and staff will be destroyed. The samples were compared with genetic material recovered from the girl's clothing.

The prosecutor says the investigation is continuing into the reported rape, which the girl says happened in a dark bathroom.

From The Associated Press



Single dad Danny Goodman finds himself unable to afford the private school his teenage daughter adores and accepts a loan that brings the DEA into his life and leads to an impossible choice: indictment for accepting drug money or an unthinkable treacherous undercover assignment.

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## FACES

# WHEN CELEBS WED

## Lavish events the norm for big-name sweethearts

By ELAINE GANLEY/The Associated Press

As Romeo said: "My bounty is as boundless as the sea ... the more I give to thee, the more I have." His modern-day counterparts — the kind with deep pockets — are going all out to offer extravagant, star-studded weddings to their own Juliets.

Hip-hop star Kanye West might uphold glam-spect tradition this week with a wedding to TV reality star Kim Kardashian. The office of the mayor of Florence and the Chateau de Versailles say the couple will celebrate in palatial, centuries-old venues in Italy and France. The potential bride and groom, however,

are staying mum. It would be the first marriage for him, the third for her.

Despite the hype preceding celebrity wedding vows, the special moment and the after-parties are often locked in secrecy, with photographs going exclusively to the highest bidder.

And love itself is often less immortal than Shakespeare had in mind. Kardashian's second marriage to basketball star Kris Humphries lasted 72 days.

A look at some of the more glamorous celebrity weddings of late:



### THE FANTASY: Eva Longoria-Tony Parker

Eva Longoria, who found fame on the TV soap "Desperate Housewives," and NBA star Tony Parker married in 2007 at a Paris church that was once frequented by royalty. It was stage two of a weekend extravaganza — all hidden from view, even by umbrellas at the church. Stage one was a civil ceremony conducted by then-Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoë. The Baroque 17th-century Vaux-le-Vicomte chateau near Paris opened its gates for the grand finale where guests swept across its marble-floored ballroom. The couple divorced in 2011.



### THE FAIRY TALE: Liz Hurley-Arun Nayar

The wedding of actress-model Liz Hurley and businessman Arun Nayar began in Britain and moved through several cities in India over six days. The blessing and party in 2007 at Sudeley Castle west of London drew the likes of Elton John, arriving by helicopter, Kate Moss and actor Hugh Grant, Hurley's ex. From there the wedding moved to Mumbai for celebrations that ended at the Maharaja of Jodhpur's palace for a traditional Hindu ceremony, some 60 guests in tow. Secrecy was so tight that guests' cellphones were banned, the Hindustan Times newspaper reported. The couple divorced in 2011.



### THE TV MARRIAGE: Kim Kardashian-Kris Humphries

There were few secrets about the Kardashian-Humphries marriage in August 2011: It was televised. Fans had to wait until October to see the two-part special on E!, but the Kardashians posted a stream of updates on their blogs and websites. Among the 440 guests at the California wedding were boxing champ Sugar Ray Leonard, Lindsay Lohan and Eva Longoria.

### THE NEVER-ENDING KISS: Katie Holmes-Tom Cruise

Tom Cruise arrived for his 2006 wedding at a 15th-century Italian castle accompanied by flag bearers in medieval costumes as he walked down a stone ramp, drums rolling. Bride Katie Holmes wore Armani and the designer was among the guests in Bracciano outside Rome, along with Richard Gere, Jennifer Lopez, Jim Carrey and Victoria Beckham. Italian singer Andrea Bocelli serenaded the couple, and fireworks lit the sky. Despite the lavish accoutrements, the couple exchanged vows in a former stable decorated with white flowers in a Scientology ceremony. Then came their "never-ending kiss" — so long that guests shouted for them to stop, Giorgio Armani recounted later. The couple divorced in 2012.



Kim Kardashian and Kanye West will wed and host a reception at Florence's Belvedere Fort on May 24, a spokeswoman at the Florence, Italy, mayor's office said. Located near the Arno River, it offers a view of Florence and the Tuscan hills.

AP photos



JORDAN STRAUSS, INVISION/AP

Caleb Johnson won the 13th season of "American Idol" on Wednesday.

## 'American Idol' crowns champ

The Associated Press

Big-voiced rocker Caleb Johnson is the season 13 "American Idol," winning the title over teenage pop singer Jena Irene. "This is crazy," Johnson said after host Ryan Seacrest announced the TV audience's decision on Wednesday's season finale of the Fox contest.

Johnson, 23, of Asheville, N.C., and Irene, 17, of Farmington Hills, Mich., told each other "you da bomb" before the result was revealed. Runner-up Irene is getting a consolation prize: The two competitors and friends are set to attend her high school prom, Seacrest said.

Johnson's win came on the strength of his renditions Tuesday of "Dream On," "Maybe I'm Amazed" and "As Long as You Love Me," intended as his first single. Irene sang "Dog Days Are Over," "Can't Help Falling in Love" and "We Are One."

Johnson is to receive a recording contract as this season's champion.

### Filming begins in Detroit

Warner Bros. Pictures says filming has started in Detroit for "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice," starring Henry Cavill, reprising his role as Clark Kent/ Superman, and Ben Affleck as Bruce Wayne/Batman.

The studio said Wednesday the action feature directed by Zack Snyder will also star Israel-born actress Gal Gadot as Diana Prince/Wonder Woman; Jesse Eisenberg as Lex Luthor; Jeremy Irons as Alfred, Wayne's loyal guardian; and Holly Hunter in a newly created role.

"Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice," with additional shooting locations in Illinois, Africa and the South Pacific, is set for release on May 6, 2016.

### Fans to get chance at cameo

"Star Wars: Episode VII" director J.J. Abrams is giving fans a shot at a cameo in the film that's set to be released next year. Disney, Lucasfilm and Bad Robot have teamed up for a campaign to raise funds for UNICEF. Abrams announced the initiative in a video from the set of the movie in Abu Dhabi. For every \$10 donation at Omaze.com/StarWars, contributors will become eligible to appear in the film when it shoots in London. The campaign runs until 11:59 p.m. PDT on July 18.

### King to perform at rally

Songwriter and singer Carole King is scheduled to perform at an Idaho rally for a U.S. soldier held captive by the Taliban since 2009. The Idaho Mountain Express reported Wednesday that King, whose hits include "You've Got a Friend," will perform for free in Hailey on June 28 at the event intended to raise awareness for Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl. The 28-year-old Bergdahl is from Hailey and is the only American held captive in the Afghan war.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Fla.-based tabloid moving to New York

**FL** WEST PALM BEACH — A tabloid that has long prided itself on turning heads in supermarket checkout lines is heading back to its New York roots.

The National Enquirer is leaving its Boca Raton headquarters and in June will begin operations in New York under a new editor with a mandate to broaden its audience and give it some Internet-age flourish.

"This is a move that is designed to build on the extraordinary," said Dylan Howard, 32, who is becoming editor of the publication while retaining his title of editorial director of RadarOnline.

Radar and the Enquirer will remain separate, each with their own staffs, but Howard said there would be "closer collaboration" between the titles and that the Enquirer would seek to bolster its online offerings.

## Cows on highway cause 2 car crashes

**OK** COGAR — Four people were injured in two separate wrecks caused by cows standing in the middle of a rural Oklahoma highway.

The first wreck was reported late Tuesday on State Highway 52 in Caddo County. The Oklahoma Highway Patrol said a 34-year-old man struck a cow that was in the middle of the road. The driver was taken to a hospital with head injuries and was in fair condition.

The second wreck occurred early Wednesday in the same spot on the road. The highway patrol said three people, including a juvenile, were injured when their car struck two cows. The car then hit a culvert and crashed into a fence.

The highway patrol said all three people in the car are in fair condition at hospitals.

## Egg company charged in 2010 outbreak

**IA** IOWA CITY — Federal prosecutors have filed charges against an Iowa egg company and two executives blamed in a 2010 salmonella outbreak that sickened thousands.

Disgraced egg industry titan Austin "Jack" DeCoster and his son, Peter, were charged Wednesday with introducing adulterated food into interstate commerce, a misdemeanor. A charging document said the pair sold shell eggs that were poisonous in 2010.

Their company, Quality Egg LLC, is charged with introducing misbranded food into interstate commerce, a felony. The document said Quality Egg sold products for years with labeling that "made the eggs appear to be not as old as they actually were."

The company is also charged with bribing a U.S. Department of Agriculture Inspector.

## Passer-by delivers fawn after deer is killed

**MN** PRIOR LAKE — A landscaper who carries a retractable box cutter de-

## THE CENSUS

# 225

The number of people in a southwest Ohio county who died from drug overdoses last year. Officials in Montgomery County, population 500,000, hope graphic images on two large digital billboards will push heroin addicts to get help. The billboard campaign introduced Tuesday depicts a morgue scene with a dead person's toe tag reading "Overdosed." The signs urge addicts to call a phone number for a crisis agency to get help. "We don't believe that two billboards are going to all of a sudden turn this around," County Commissioner Dan Foley said. "But we're hoping this will be a very visual, top-of-the-mind message to the community that there are people in the community who want to help them."



NICK ELLIS, THE BAKERSFIELD CALIFORNIAN/AP

## Pitcher purrfect?

Ryan Triantafilo helps Tara the cat try to throw the first pitch, using a baseball attached to a fishing line, at the Bakersfield Blaze baseball game at Sam Lynn Ballpark on Tuesday in Bakersfield, Calif. Tara was captured on security camera when she pounced on a dog that attacked Triantafilo's son, Jeremy, 4, and the video has garnered 21 million YouTube views. At the game, Jeremy stepped in for Tara and threw the actual ceremonial first pitch.

## Report: State most risky for senior walkers

**HI** HONOLULU — Hawaii is proving to be a dangerous place for senior pedestrians.

The Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported Hawaii has the highest fatality rate in the nation per capita for older pedestrians.

This is according to a new report from Smart Growth America, which says Hawaii has 6.81 deaths per every 100,000 adults 65 and older. The report covers the years 2003 to 2010.

The fatality rate jumps to 9.75 per 100,000 residents for those 75 and older.

Honolulu city officials passed

an ordinance in 2012 to ensure city planners include walking and bicycling considerations in new transportation projects. Three demonstration projects in that effort should be finished this year.

## Prison launches yoga program for inmates

**NM** ALBUQUERQUE — The New Mexico Department of Corrections is using a new method to prepare inmates for life outside prison — yoga.

Corrections officials recently launched a "yoga and mindfulness" program as part of the department's many rehabilitation efforts.

According to the department,

the yoga classes will "help incarcerated individuals on their path to self-discovery, healing and ultimately into living differently."

Officials said other prisons systems are using yoga classes as a method for increasing inmate and public safety and for lowering rates of recidivism rates.

"There is substantial research suggesting that yoga and mindfulness programming, in conjunction with the methods already in place by Corrections, would help NMCD in its efforts to reach its central goal of recidivism reduction," the department said in a report outlining its new inmate programs.

From wire reports

## BUSINESS/WEATHER

## eBay urges new passwords after breach

By MAE ANDERSON  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — E-commerce site eBay is asking users to change their passwords after a cyberattack compromised a company database containing customers' names, encrypted passwords, email addresses, physical addresses, phone numbers and dates of birth.

The company said Wednesday that there is no evidence that any

financial or credit card information was stolen and no sign that the breach has resulted in unauthorized activity for its 145 million active users.

eBay says its investigation is active and it can't comment on the specific number of accounts affected, but says the number could be large.

Cyberattackers stole a small number of employee log-in credentials that gave access to eBay's corporate network, the company

said. The San Jose, Calif.-based company is working with law enforcement to investigate the attack.

The database was hacked sometime between late February and early March, but compromised employee log-in credentials were first detected two weeks ago.

eBay owns electronic payment service PayPal, but eBay says there is no evidence PayPal information was hacked, because that data is stored separately.

The attack follows several other high-profile data security incidents, including a massive breach at Target stores and the recent discovery of the "Heartbleed" computer security flaw.

Heartbleed is a point of weakness in a key piece of security technology used by more than 500,000 websites that had been exposing online passwords and other sensitive data to potential theft for more than two years.

## EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (May 23)	\$1.4037
Dollar buys (May 23)	€0.7124
British pound (May 23)	\$1.713
Japanese yen (May 23)	¥98.00
South Korean won (May 23)	₩998.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3771
British pound	\$1.6859/5,932
Canada (dollar)	1.0907
China (Yuan)	6.2353
Denmark (Krone)	5.4689
Egypt (Pound)	1.1331
Hong Kong (Dollar)	\$1.3648/7,327
Hungary (Forint)	222.45
Israel (Shekel)	3.4870
Japan (Yen)	101.68
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.2818
Norway (Krone)	5.9486
Philippines (Peso)	43.73
Poland (Zloty)	3.36
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7507
Singapore (Dollar)	1.2521
South Korea (Won)	1,025.17
Switzerland (Franc)	0.8950
Thailand (Baht)	32.54
Turkey (New Lira)	2.0869

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., those that are not issued by the bank with which your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

## INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	4.00
Federal funds market rate	0.09
3-month bill	0.03
30-year bond	3.41

## EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Germany	\$3.592	\$4.081	\$4.248	\$4.171
UK	-4.3 cents	-0.6 cents	-0.4 cents	-1.4 cents
Netherlands	---	\$4.885	\$5.182	\$5.059
Change in price	---	+2.8 cents	+3.2 cents	+7.4 cents
U.K.	---	\$4.016	\$4.183	\$4.106
Change in price	---	-0.6 cents	-0.4 cents	-1.4 cents
Azores	---	---	\$4.482	---
Change in price	---	---	no change	---
U.K.	---	\$4.084	\$4.215	\$4.215
Change in price	---	no change	no change	no change
Turkey	---	---	\$4.445	\$4.039
Change in price	---	---	no change	-1.4 cents
Italy	\$3.974	---	\$4.239	---
Change in price	no change	---	---	no change

## PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Japan	---	\$3.639	---	\$3.929
Change in price	---	no change	---	-1.0 cents
Okunawa	\$3.659	---	\$3.929	---
Change in price	no change	---	-1.0 cents	---
South Korea	\$3.919	---	\$4.269	\$4.189
Change in price	no change	---	no change	-1.0 cents
Guam	\$3.909**	\$4.089	\$4.259	---
Change in price	-1.0 cents	-1.0 cents	no change	---

\* Diesel EFD \*\* Midgrade  
For the week of May 24-30

## MARKET WATCH

May 21, 2014

Dow Jones Industrials	15,875
	16,533.06
Nasdaq composite	3,465
	4,131.54
Standard & Poor's 500	1,820
	1,888.03
Russell 2000	5,73
	1,103.83

## WEATHER OUTLOOK



## Friday's US temperatures

City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr
Ablene, Tex	82	68	Cldy	Chatanooga	87	66	Cldy	Fort Wayne	70	47	PCldy	Louisville	78	60	PCldy
Albany, N.Y.	67	49	Cldy	Chicago	66	49	Cldy	Fresno	96	62	Cldy	Lubbock	77	65	PCldy
Albuquerque	67	49	Cldy	Cincinnati	72	52	Cldy	Goodland	74	56	Rain	Macon	94	66	PCldy
Allentown, Pa.	69	52	Cldy	Cleveland	67	51	Cldy	Grand Rapids	70	45	Cldy	Madison	87	73	PCldy
Amarillo	62	43	PCldy	Colorado Springs	73	49	PCldy	Great Falls	81	60	PCldy	Memphis	89	68	Cldy
Anchorage	62	43	PCldy	Columbia, S.C.	92	68	Cldy	Green Bay	81	64	PCldy	Midland-Odessa	81	64	PCldy
Asheville	80	57	PCldy	Columbus, Ga.	93	67	PCldy	Hartford	71	53	Cldy	Milwaukee	63	49	Cldy
Atlanta	89	70	PCldy	Concord, N.H.	93	67	Cldy	Hartford	71	53	Cldy	Mpls-St Paul	75	48	Cldy
Atlantic City	71	55	Cldy	Corpus Christi	85	73	Cldy	Havana	82	50	Cldy	Missoula	80	46	Cldy
Austin	63	53	Cldy	Dallas-Ft Worth	89	69	Cldy	Honolulu	87	73	PCldy	Monterey	91	69	PCldy
Baltimore	74	55	Cldy	Dayton	70	50	Cldy	Houston	87	71	PCldy	Nashville	84	65	PCldy
Baton Rouge	90	68	Cldy	Denver	93	68	Cldy	Huntsville	90	65	PCldy	Nashville	84	65	PCldy
Bilings	82	52	PCldy	Des Moines	72	52	Cldy	Indianapolis	72	52	Cldy	New Orleans	87	69	Cldy
Birmingham	90	67	Cldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	New York City	66	56	Cldy
Bismarck	82	53	PCldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	Newark	68	56	Cldy
Boise	83	53	PCldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	Norfolk-Va.	78	65	PCldy
Boston	57	50	Cldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	North Lake City	78	65	PCldy
Bridgport	66	53	Cldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	San Antonio	83	68	Cldy
Brownsville	67	50	Cldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	San Diego	68	62	Cldy
Buffalo	60	49	Cldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	San Francisco	74	55	Cldy
Burlington, Vt.	67	52	Cldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	San Jose	82	64	Cldy
Caribou, Maine	61	46	PCldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	Santa Fe	73	47	Cldy
Charleston, S.C.	74	45	PCldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	St. Louis	65	38	PCldy
Charlotte, N.C.	93	69	Cldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	Savannah	94	69	Cldy
Charlotte, W.Va.	73	55	PCldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	Seattle	69	55	PCldy
Charlotte, N.C.	85	64	Cldy	El Paso	88	68	PCldy	Jacksonville	92	64	Cldy	Shreveport	88	66	PCldy

The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

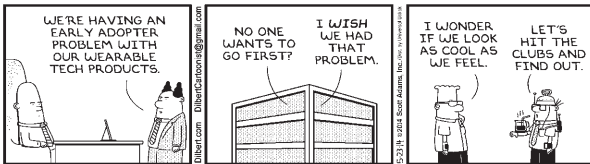
National temperature extremes  
Hi: Wed., 28, Pecos, Texas  
Lo: Wed., 25, Antares Reservoir, Colo.  
and Twin Lakes, Colo.



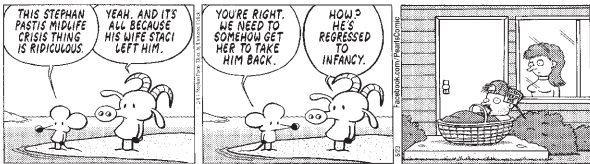
Frazz



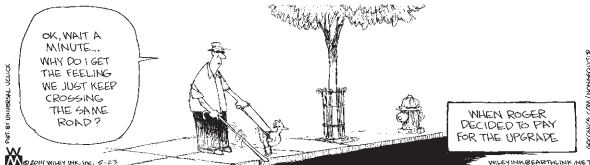
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



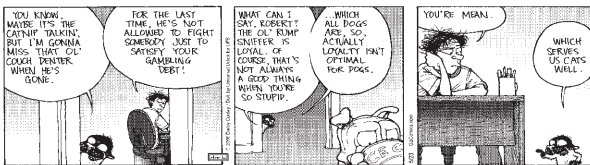
Non Sequitur



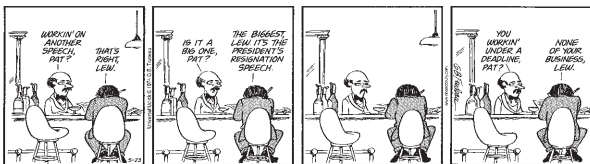
Candorville



Get Fuzzy



Doonesbury



Fort Knox



## Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15				16					17			
18							19	20				
				21			22			23	24	25
26	27	28				29				30		
31					32				33			
34					35				36			
37				38			39					
				40			41			42	43	44
45	46	47				48	49					
50						51				52		
53						54				55		

### ACROSS

- Mandible
- Vinegery
- Sculpture medium
- Prior to
- Croupier's tool
- European capital
- Fine metal openwork
- Pivot line
- Stumble
- Manhandle
- Whatever amount
- Extra touch
- Cockeyed
- Prohibit
- Expert
- PlayStation maker
- Cauldron
- Highlander
- Table scrap
- Cornfield call
- "Home, Sweet Home" writer
- Squalid
- Crony
- Existed
- Weakness cause
- Vapor
- Light bulb part
- Somewhere out there
- Utah city
- Way back when
- Fisherman's perch, often

54 Tabula descriptor

55 Hightail it

### DOWN

- Funny Foxworthy
- Soprano's solo
- Water source
- Silver (Lat.)
- Tote
- Eisenhower
- Frying medium
- Move on all fours
- Bagel topper
- "— Blue?"
- "Certainly"
- 14-Across's country
- Football filler
- Frilly
- PC picture
- Sampras or Seeger
- Since
- Singer Amos
- Worldwide (Abbr.)
- Violinist's prop
- Covers, in a way
- "The Crucible" setting
- Half a dance?
- Central American nation
- Move like Miley
- Losses color
- Repast
- Actress Swenson
- Farm's bit
- Craze
- Venusian vessel?
- "Where to, —?"
- A Gershwin brother

### Answer to Previous Puzzle

M	A	C	E	R	A	J	A	L	E	G
I	M	A	M	O	D	E	S	I	D	O
F	I	R	M	A	M	E	N	T	G	I
F	R	E	E	L	Y	O	R	A	T	E
				T	I			S	T	R
K	N	O	T	P	A	R	B	E	T	A
E	R	R	O	V	A	N	O	R		
N	A	N	A	L	O	P	A	T	O	M
			A	R	B	O	R	I	N	
G	U	M	B	O				P	R	I
A	R	E	S	A	C	R	A	M	E	N
Z	I	N	O	L	I	O	A	R	T	Y
E	S	T	M	E	D	S	L	O	S	E

5-23

### CRYPTOQUIP

NFXP HZBHEZ BX KWDI  
UZFTW FCZ NRTW KBB HFEZ.  
IBNZUBJP CZFEEP IWBREJ

T FEE KWZ FIWZX HBEDTZ.  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I AM NOT QUITE SUCH A BOISTEROUS PARTICIPANT IN THESE MOB SCENES. I'M A QUIETER RIOTER.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals P

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Ernie Gates

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# OPINION

## Obama late again in VA controversy

By CARL P. LEUBSDORF  
 The Dallas Morning News

Once again, a management mess. Once again, the White House says an angry president vows to fix things.

And once again, that vow comes more than a little late, creating another political problem for Barack Obama.

The president's initial reaction to reports that Veterans Affairs officials covered up that perhaps two dozen veterans died because of delays in getting appointments was strikingly similar to his initial comments after last fall's disastrous Affordable Care Act rollout.

In both cases, the White House bureaucracy reacted similarly, assigning a top staffer to supervise fact-finding and corrective efforts.

But Obama shifted gears Wednesday, clearly recognizing that he needs to do more to try to assure Americans that he is on top of the situation. Stepping before the cameras after meeting with embattled Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki, he declared, "I won't stand for" misconduct, and he vowed that if it's found, "it will be punished."

Obama rejected any housecleaning, such as firing Shinseki, until there's a full review of the facts. But he pointedly limited his praise of the secretary to saying several times that "nobody cares more about our veterans than Eric Shinseki," while stressing that he expects accountability and prompt corrective steps.

It's more than troubling that, after five years in office, Obama once again took weeks before acknowledging an administration management problem, an indication that the White House still has not fixed the failures that have plagued it all the way back to the unveiling of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, a.k.a. the stimulus.

It's easy to blame much of this on Obama's lack of management experience. While his 2008 campaign was marked by administrative efficiency, that's been lacking in his White House, in part because of his own failure to follow up after he delegates responsibility to others.



SUSAN WALSH/AP

**President Barack Obama speaks in the White House on Wednesday following his meeting with Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki.**

Exhibit No. 1, of course, is the Affordable Care Act. From the onset of last October's launch, the computer system created by the Department of Health and Human Services suffered from repeated breakdowns and complicated procedures that were difficult to navigate.

More than three weeks passed before Obama addressed the situation publicly, declaring, "Nobody's madder than me about the fact that the website isn't working as well as it should, which means it's going to get fixed."

White House budget official Jeffrey Zients was delegated to oversee a crash corrective effort, but none of the responsible officials were initially replaced. (Some departed subsequently, and HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius resigned six months later.)

To Obama's credit, Zients fixed the problem. By mid-April, more than 8 million people had enrolled in the health program, well above earlier forecasts.

More recently, reports surfaced that Veterans Affairs Department officials may have covered up possibly deadly delays in treatment at the VA facility in Phoenix and elsewhere.

On CBS' "Face the Nation" on Sunday, White House chief of staff Denis McDonough said Obama is "madder than hell, and I've got the scars to prove it" from meetings discussing the problem. "We're

going to get to the bottom of those things, fix them and ensure that they don't happen again," he said.

The White House named deputy chief of staff Rob Nabors to oversee the effort. But after meeting Wednesday with Shinseki and Nabors, Obama himself addressed the issue, vowing to fix the situation while contending that his administration has made progress over the past five years in cutting average patient waiting times in half.

Taking a methodical rather than a more urgent approach will hardly satisfy administration critics, especially veterans groups and lawmakers who have called for Shinseki's resignation. "We haven't seen that quick proactive vs. reactive culture change we'd like to see," American Legion commander Daniel Dellinger said on "Face the Nation."

Meanwhile, there still seems to be substantial dispute over how many veterans died while awaiting treatment in Phoenix and at least seven other facilities. Whatever the number, it's too high.

On Wednesday, Obama showed an understanding that he needs to do more than be "madder than hell" about longstanding problems. Few would be surprised if, sooner rather than later, that includes Shinseki's departure.

Leubsdorf is the former Washington bureau chief of the Dallas Morning News.

## Maybe it's time that women learn to swagger

By CATHERINE RAMPELL

The Washington Post

Maybe women are not sufficiently full of themselves. But let's not coach them to be full of something else, either.

Read the rash of corporate self-help books and articles lately unleashed upon the world's white-collar women — like "The Confidence Code" and "Lean In" — and you'll learn that there is a yawning "confidence gap" between the sexes.

Among the alarming symptoms and evidence, as women on the most successful of us are riddled with self-doubt. We second-guess our next moves constantly and "ruminate" over past failures. We withhold our opinions in big meetings, while less-informed men freely bluster and blaviate, one-upping and interrupting each other. Even in anonymous political opinion polls, women are more likely than men to say "I don't know" when pressed for a view on something about which we actually know quite a bit.

When we do express opinions, we too often apologize for or prematurely disclaim them ... or intonate them as questions rather than statements. We don't throw our bonnets into

the ring for promotions and raises for which we're surely qualified, whereas men toss in their cowboy hats even when their own credentials appear comically deficient.

The self-assurance deficit reinforces the glass ceiling because confidence seems to help people perform better on certain tasks — and, perhaps more important, swagger leads others to perceive us as more competent. One study that asked business school students about imaginary historical people and events ... found that those who feigned familiarity with the fictional figures achieved the highest social status among peers.

These are familiar, broad-brush gender stereotypes, of course, often underpinned by tiny lab experiments conducted on callow university students or by corporate surveys administered with little outside scrutiny. But many of them ring true to me — both as a young woman with brilliant and accomplished but perpetually self-doubting girlfriends and as an opinion journalist. (Op-ed pages are often criticized for their dearth of female voices, but the gender imbalance is because men are more likely to submit unsolicited guest columns and to accept direct invitations to write.)

So sure, whether because of biology or socialization, women are underselling them-

selves, and could stand to be a little more confident. Still, it's not clear to me why this so-called "confidence gap" has been framed exclusively as a woman's problem or why the optimal solution is for women to ape the men with whom they compete.

Those very same studies that show women to be underconfident often show men to be overconfident. "The Confidence Code" cites one Columbia Business School study documenting that men typically rate their performance 30 percent better than it actually is. A survey released last week by YouGov found that, when asked to compare their own intelligence to that of the "average American," about a quarter of men declared themselves "much more intelligent," vs. just 15 percent of women. Lake Wobegon, it seems, is brimming with testosterone.

In short, men seem much more willing to be blowhards than women are — during dinner parties, at the office, on anonymous phone surveys and in the nation's fine op-ed pages. And as long as both employers and peers continue to conflate bluster with aptitude and to reward bombast with respect and job promotions, the only way women can successfully compete with men is to be not just more confident but overconfident in everything they do, too.

## OPINION

## What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

### Racism and sexism The (New Jersey) Star-Ledger

Now and then, we choose the most convenient prism through which to view our most serious social problems, however superficially, because it comes packaged in equal doses of celebrity and infamy.

There is a drug crisis in most states, but it hardly registers until Rob Ford's drooling visage fills the TV screen or Philip Seymour Hoffman drops dead. This country has a mass shooting problem, with 4,500 dead and 19,600 more bleeding on ER tables so far this year, but the world doesn't notice until Placido Domingo puts a hole in his own thigh. We cannot educate children in many cities, but the tragedy goes unnoticed until some altruistic billionaire drops \$100 million on Newark.

So now there is fresh dialogue about racism and sexism, an spilling into the mainstream media with an inalterable shove from Donald Sterling and Jill Abramson. But to discuss either as a cause célèbre is to trivialize the real issues.

Abramson, a journalist as subtle as a blowtorch, was accused of unspecified acts of brusque behavior, committed among the princely hierarchy at The New York Times. But the theme that had the nation's attention was an unsubstantiated claim involving a lower salary than the one earned by her predecessor.

Indeed, Abramson might be a sympathizer figure. But gender justice isn't so much about an executive making \$450,000 as it is about a woman who had an abortion that was muted the moment the U.S. Senate blocked a vote last month, and about having the worst maternity leave policy in the world.

Moreover, racism isn't merely the purview of dotty old men such as Sterling. Racism is common currency in our political culture — not only in Cliven Bundy's America, but in the institutional marginalization of minorities by our courts and our laws, which conspire to produce segregated schools and voting restrictions and countless wars waged on the poor.

Theologian Paul Tillich said if we don't develop a keener eye for racism or sexism or homophobia, and address them only when the news cycle gives us no other choice, we're mistaking moralism for morality. The real systemic sins are hiding inside the latter. Yet the cycle spins on.

### China's hacking Orange County (Calif.) Register

Actor Claude Rains is perhaps best known for his role as Capt. Louis Renault in the 1942 film "Casablanca." In a memorable scene, he orders a popular cafe shut down on orders from his German overseers.

"How can you close me up? On what grounds?" asks the cafe owner, played by Humphrey Bogart. To which Renault replies, "I'm shocked, shocked, to find that gambling is going on here."

Just then, a croupier hands Renault a pile of money. "Your winners, sir," he tells him. To which Renault replies, not the least bit sheepishly, "Thank you very much."

We were reminded of this scene Monday when the U.S. State Department indicted five members of the Chinese military on charges of hacking the computers of five U.S. companies: Westinghouse Electric, Alcoa, Allegheny Technologies Incorporated, U.S. Steel and SolarWorld.

Attorney General Eric Holder declared himself shocked, shocked that Beijing would stoop to such cyberespionage. He vowed



**A Russian space agency rescue team helps Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Tyurin off the capsule of the Russian Soyuz TMA-11 module shortly after its landing in Kazakhstan May 14 after a half-year mission to the International Space Station. Russia's deputy prime minister said last week that his country wouldn't cooperate with the United States on the International Space Station beyond 2020.**

that the U.S. "will not tolerate actions by any nation that seeks to illegally sabotage American companies and undermine the integrity of fair competition in the operation of the free market."

We imagine that John Chambers, CEO of Cisco Systems, the network equipment company, must feel a little like the cafe owner in "Casablanca."

Indeed, while the Obama administration has decided to crack down on China's alleged hacking, it has not responded in a meaningful way to recent revelations that the National Security Agency has secretly installed surveillance technology in servers and networking gear — including products made by Cisco.

In a letter Thursday to President Barack Obama, Chambers cites reports that the NSA actually has intercepted IT equipment in transit from manufacturers to customers. Those reports also included a photograph of a Cisco product being modified.

Cisco's CEO warns that the actions of the NSA, tacitly sanctioned by the Obama administration, have undermined confidence in the U.S. technology.

"This confidence is eroded," he wrote the president, "by revelations of governments' surveillance, government demands that make it difficult for companies to meet privacy expectations of citizens and laws of other countries, and allegations that governments exploit, rather than report, security vulnerabilities."

That erosion of confidence has already hurt U.S. companies, like Cisco, doing business in foreign markets.

### International Space Station (Biloxi, Miss.) Sun Herald

If you want to see the price of our dysfunctional government, just look up — up toward the International Space Station.

It once was a symbol of international cooperation, but it is now caught in a web of intrigue that threatens its existence. The United States, having shut down the space shuttle, the only craft it had capable of taking astronauts to and from the space station,

is now at the mercy of Russia, which is taking advantage of that situation.

We have a single seat on each flight of a Russian craft — at a cost of \$71 million per trip. Only one-third of the crew at the station at any given time is American, even though the U.S. paid for most of the station's \$140 million price tag.

There is plenty of blame to spread around. President George W. Bush got things started when he decided in 2004 that NASA's mission should be a return to the moon and space colonization. That plan retired the shuttle in favor of building deep space rockets.

That left a gap between the end of the shuttle program and the launch of new craft capable of carrying people into space.

When Barack Obama became president he decided we needed a quicker way for ferry astronauts to the station and left it up to commercial interests to figure out how to do it.

Congress balked and underfunded the commercial program, which means the first flight will be in 2017, not 2015 as Obama envisioned. Not the best solution but a workable plan — until Russia annexed Crimea.

In the tit-for-tat that followed, the Russians threatened to pull the plug on the Space Station by 2020. That would seem to make it even more urgent to get these commercial flights — flights that Stennis Space Center could play a big role in — as soon as possible.

We shouldn't have to rely on Russia, an unreliable "partner" at best and a country that doesn't seem to be seeing us as much of an ally in its ambitions.

And we shouldn't be playing politics with an investment of more than \$100 billion.

### U.S. Export-Import Bank The Augusta (Ga.) Chronicle

Government agencies, bureaus and departments whose services are no longer needed tend to hang around too long. Bureaucracies, once in place, are difficult to remove.

The task becomes far easier when the

agency has an expiration date.

The U.S. Export-Import Bank is such an agency. Lawmakers should let its Sept. 30 expiration date pass without a reauthorization.

This Depression-era relic that most taxpayers have never heard of uses its money to secure financing for favored corporations and foreign governments under the aegis of "facilitating" U.S. exports.

Like most New Deal-era machinations, the Export-Import Bank's time has come and gone.

Global trade is no longer the exotic and tumultuous prospect it was when President Roosevelt created Ex-Im to finance trade with the Soviet Union in 1934. These days, any major American corporation without its salt has been doing business overseas without assistance for decades. And thanks to e-commerce, even small businesses are exporting their wares overseas.

So what does Ex-Im do exactly? If you ask Diane Katz, the Heritage Foundation's regulatory policy fellow, Ex-Im is "a conduit for corporate welfare beset by unreliable risk management, inefficiency and cronyism."

That assessment is backed up by a review of its annual report. Ex-Im's biggest customers are multinational U.S. corporations such as Bechtel, Boeing, Caterpillar and General Electric — the kinds of "exporters" most would be shocked to learn need taxpayer-funded assistance.

As with most forms of corporate welfare, Ex-Im's spoils tend to go to the companies with the most lobbyists and biggest government relations budgets. You can be assured Big Business lobbyists are working overtime to ensure the spigot to the government-finance hose isn't turned off.

If our elected officials were truly committed to bolstering America's competitiveness in the global trade, they would eschew corporate welfare for a reduction in export tax and regulatory barriers — starting with Dodd-Frank regulations — and reduce the corporate income tax to encourage U.S. companies to repatriate their overseas profits.

One way you slice it, Ex-Im is one dinosaur that should be allowed to go extinct.

### Benghazi's no-fly zone Khaleej (Dubai) Times

Three years of turmoil with three prime ministers having been shown the door has brought things to a head-on collision in Libya.

The worst to come in is the form of a no-fly zone that was imposed by the army over Benghazi, as militants continue to fight pitched battles with the security forces. Since Colonel Muammar Gaddafi was overthrown, Libya has gone from worse to worst, and the writ of the government has been lacking. At times, it seems to be a field day for the militaries as they are free to sell the oil in international market as well as abduct the prime minister on their own. This state of affairs is not only unravelling the North African country but also enabling the tendency of militancy to explode beyond its borders.

With more than 50 people killed and hundreds injured in a latest clash between the military and the rebels, Benghazi is once again in trouble. Libya's second-largest city was home to some of the worst upheaval as militants ransacked the U.S. facility there in 2012 and killed its envoy and four other diplomats. This is the first time one of the most unique of its kind wherein the state army is engaged against a paramilitary group that has laid its hands on aircraft and is capable enough to fly its own sorties. This unnerving news incidentally comes in the wake of coup rumors.

With more than a tragedy for the prosperous and resource-rich African-Arab country to experience a web of militants among its midst and members of civil and military bureaucracy defecting to rebel groups. This civil war in Libya is a precursor for disaster, and something serious is in the air. It is time to beg the country from going over the brink.



## SCOREBOARD

## Sports on AFN

Go to the American Forces Network website for the most up-to-date TV schedules.  
myafn.net

## Pro soccer

MLS			
	W	T	Pts of GA
New England	6	3	20 19
Portland	5	3	18 16
Sporting KC	5	2	18 13
Houston	5	2	17 16
Colorado	5	2	17 16
Columbus	5	2	17 16
Toronto FC	4	4	13 14
San Jose	4	2	12 19
Philadelphia	2	6	11 15
Montreal	2	6	11 15

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Western Conference			
	W	T	Pts of GA
Seattle	8	3	25 23
Real Salt Lake	6	0	23 13
FC Dallas	6	0	22 12
Vancouver	4	2	16 12
San Diego	4	2	16 12
Los Angeles	3	3	12 10
San Jose	3	3	12 10
Chivas USA	2	5	10 13
Portland	2	3	10 16

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

W = Wins, T = Ties, Pts = Points, GA = Goals Against

Yellow Cards—Aarnaud, D.C. United, 3fifth; 66th; Barnes, Houston, 66th; Espindola, D.C. United, 72nd.

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## College baseball

## Wednesday's scores

## Tournaments

## American Athletic Conference

## UTR 7, UConn 1

## Houston 3, Temple 0

## Atlantic Coast Conference

## Clemson 5, Duke 3

## Georgia Tech 1, Miami 3

## North Carolina 1, Virginia Tech 0

## Stetson 7, Mercer 5

## Florida Gulf Coast 5, North Florida 3

## Upstate 2, Jacksonville 1

## Indiana 10, Kansas 3

## VCU 5, Richmond 2

## Saint Joseph's 9, Fordham 4

## George Mason 4, Dayton 3

## Big South Conference

## Charleston Southern vs. Campbell, ppd.

## Radford vs. Gardner-Webb, ppd.

## Big Ten Conference

## Michigan 3, Ohio St. 6

## Michigan 3, Illinois 1

## Michigan 3, Minnesota 2

## Big 12 Conference

## West Virginia 10, Kansas 3

## TCU 8, Baylor 5

## Texas Tech 3, Texas Tech 3

## Colonial Athletic Association

## Delaware 4, North Carolina 1

## UNC-Wilmington 11, James Madison 10

## Mid-American Conference

## Northern Illinois 3, Eastern Michigan 1

## Middle Tennessee 3, Old Dominion 2

## East Carolina 9, Southern Miss. 8

## Horizon League

## Milwaukee 4, Oakland 2

## Marquette 2, Manhattan 1

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## Tennis

## Nice Open

## At The Nice Lawn Tennis Club

## Surface: \$665,000 (W750)

## Purse: Clay-Outdoor

## Second Round

## John Isner (1), United States, def. Jack Sock (1), United States, 6-4, 6-3.

## Albert Montanes, Spain, def. Sam Querrey, United States, 6-4, 6-2.

## Leonardo Mayer, Argentina, def. Edouard Roger-Vasselin, France, 6-4, 3-6, 7-5.

## Nicola Pietrangeli, Argentina, def. Nicolas Pietrangeli, Argentina, 6-2, 6-3.

## Federico Delbonis (7), Argentina, def. Roberto Bautista Agut, Spain, 6-4, 6-2.

## Dmitry Tursunov (5), Russia, def. Robi Andrich, Italy, 6-4, 6-3.

## Ernesto Gimenez (2), Latvia, def. Martin Kližan, Slovakia, 6-7 (4), 6-4, 6-1.

## Gilles Simon (4), France, def. Dominic Thiem, Austria, 6-3, 4-6, 6-2.

## Quaterfinals

## Rohan Bopanna, India, and Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi (1), Pakistan, def. Daniele Braccioni (1), Italy, and Oliver Marach, Austria, 5-7, 7-6 (9), 10-8.

## Jürgen Bennet and Edouard Roger-Vasselin (3), France, def. Andre Agassi, United States, and Andre Sa, Brazil, 6-4, 5-7, 10-5.

## Ken and Neal Skladanowicz, Canada, def. Carlos Berlocq and Leonardo Mayer, Argentina, 6-1, 7-6 (2).

## Duesseldorf Open

## At Rostocher

## Duesseldorf, Germany

## Surface: \$665,000 (W750)

## Purse: Clay-Outdoor

## First Round

## Juan Kubler, Australia, def. Alessandro Giannessi, Italy, 7-5,

## WORLD CUP

FIFA VP  
frustrated  
by racismBy ROB HARRIS  
The Associated Press

LONDON — FIFA Vice President Jeffrey Webb condemned “deep rooted racism” in Italy on Wednesday after Mario Balotelli was racially abused while training with the national team.

A year after spearheading the strengthening of FIFA’s discrimination sanctions, Webb is frustrated that some countries, including Italy and Spain, are not showing the commitment required to fight racism.

“National associations obviously really have to not just talk about zero tolerance — they have to put action behind it,” Webb told The Associated Press in an interview in London. “If you

look at some of the decisions that have been taken in Spain and Italy definitely that’s cause for concern.”

Balotelli, who is black, faced racist chants again on Wednesday morning in Italy — this time at the national team’s World Cup training base in Florence.

“Unfortunately, it just shows the deep-rooted racism and prejudice that exists obviously in the Italian community and society at large,” said Webb, who heads FIFA’s task force against discrimination. “It is a fight, it is a challenge.”

And a challenge to ensure every country adopts the penalties adopted by FIFA last May, including minimum five-game bans for racist abuse by players, and point deductions or relegation for serious incidents in the stands.

In Spain, Villarreal’s last month was a \$16,000 fine from the league after a fan threw a banana at Barcelona defender Dani Alves, rather than any partial stadium closure for the next game.

“We have seen national associations taking decisions and they have not implemented what FIFA has adopted or what UEFA has adopted (including a minimum 10-game ban for racism),” said Webb, who is also CONCACAF president. “In those cases now we have got to make sure that those regulations go down to the national associations — and the national associations hold the clubs accountable.”

To Webb, Spanish soccer remains in a state of denial about the extent of racism and the need to show a commitment to eradicating the scourge of the game in the home of the world and European championships.

“It’s obviously very much deep-rooted,” he said of the situation in Spain.



ANDRE PENNER/AP

Corinthians and Figueirense players listen to the national anthem prior to a Brazilian soccer league match at the Itaquerao, the still-unfinished stadium that will host the World Cup opener between Brazil and Croatia on June 12, in São Paulo.

## Test match postponed

Final dress rehearsal for Itaquerao pushed back 3 days

By TALES AZZONI  
The Associated Press

SAO PAULO — FIFA and local organizers have postponed the final test event at the troubled World Cup stadium in São Paulo, raising fresh uncertainty about Brazil’s readiness to stage the tournament opener in the city.

Following concerns from local authorities, FIFA said Wednesday that a test match scheduled for May 29, a Thursday, has been moved to the following Sunday to avoid disrupting the city’s “operational routine” on a working day.

Soccer’s governing body said it also decided to stage the game on a weekend to “ensure it attracts more than 50,000” fans needed to properly test the venue.

Less than 40,000 people attended the first test match at the Itaquerao stadium in São Paulo last weekend, when the 20,000 temporary seats being added for the open-

ing game of the tournament couldn’t be used.

The new test event will be staged less than two weeks before the high-profile opener between Brazil and Croatia on June 12, when 70,000 fans and guests are expected.

**‘It (is) vital for us that all facilities will be tested under full match conditions.’**

**Jerome Valcke**  
FIFA secretary general

The change in date comes amid a bus strike in São Paulo that has created chaos for people trying to get to work in the South American metrop-

olis already known for its terrible rush-hour traffic.

FIFA said in a statement that it was a “request from local authorities” to have the match on a weekend to “reduce the impact on the city’s operational routine.”

The World Cup opener will also fall on a Thursday, but city officials are expected to declare holidays on match days during the tournament.

FIFA said it was important to have another test match at the Itaquerao “given the attention drawn from the opening match.”

Only one test event had been initially scheduled for the Itaquerao because it was among the most delayed stadiums for the World Cup. The venue was expected to be completed by the end of last year, but two construction accidents that killed a total of three workers caused significant delays.

Among the problems last weekend were a leaking roof and faulty communications for fans and journalists.

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## WORLD CUP

# Calm, cool & collected

## Donovan confident going into fourth World Cup

BY RONALD BLUM  
The Associated Press

**H**is hairline has receded during 15 years in the spotlight, seeming to retreat at the same pace as his record-breaking scoring total advanced.

Landon Donovan first became widely known in 1999, when he was voted the golden ball as the best player of the FIFA Under-17 World Championship—an award later won by Cesc Fabregas, Anderson and Toni Kroos. In a soccer world where Americans were long looked at as non-entities, Donovan's success was startling.

He was 18 when he scored against Mexico in his U.S. national team debut and has 57 goals overall, 21 more than Clint Dempsey's second-place total.

Now 32, Donovan's spot in the starting lineup is no longer assured, perhaps not even his place on the 23-man roster. If Donovan and DaMarcus Beasley make it to Brazil next month, they could become the first Americans to play in four World Cups.

"This is my last chance at this," Donovan said Monday. "For me personally, I sort of liken it to 2002. In '06 and in 2010, I knew for the most part unless I was awful that I was going to make the team. This time is more similar to '02 where I wasn't sure. And so in that way, yes, it's as competitive as it's been for me personally in a long time."

He is for many the face of American soccer, the player who spent most of his career at home instead of finding fame in Europe.

Stints at Bayer Leverkusen and Bayern Munich were unsuccessful, but he starred with the San Jose Earthquakes from 2001-04 and the Los Angeles Galaxy since 2005, winning five Major League Soccer titles and tying Jeff Cunningham for the regular-season goals record at 134.

But he's better known for his play with the national team, where his

156 appearances are eight shy of tying Cobi Jones' mark. Donovan has an American-record five World Cup goals, against Poland and Mexico in 2002, and versus Slovenia, Algeria and Ghana four years ago.

His stoppage-time goal against Les Fennecs at Pretoria's Loftus Versfeld was one of the iconic moments in American soccer, alongside Paul Caligiuri's 1989 long-range strike at Trinidad and Tobago that put the U.S. in its first World Cup in 40 years and Eric Wynalda's free kick against Switzerland in the 1994 World Cup.

"For me, it's a very easy equation. If Landon's on the field, he's our top one or two players," goalkeeper Tim Howard said. "For me, he's easily one of our best players, and he strikes fear in opponents."

Donovan doesn't have the pace he once did, but he's still among the faster Americans. His game has changed, and Klinsmann views him more a forward than a midfielder.

"I don't have that youthful energy and excitement that I did in 2002, but I see the game and I see the situation a lot more clearly now, so I'm able to I think enjoy it more in that way," Donovan said. "When you're younger, you're just sort of going crazy to do whatever it takes to make the team and you forget to enjoy it. And now I'm actually getting to enjoy it."

### By the numbers

3

World Cups in which Landon Donovan has played.

57

Goals Donovan has scored as a member of the U.S. national team.

8

Appearances on U.S. national team needed to tie Cobi Jones' mark of 164.

SOURCE: The Associated Press



American Landon Donovan controls the ball during a training session on May 14 in Stanford, Calif. Donovan is the leading American scorer in World Cup history.

TONY AVELAR/AP



## AUTO RACING

# Scott first African-American in NASCAR Hall

Elliott, White, Lorenzen, Weatherly fill out class

By PETE IACOBELLI  
The Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Wendell Scott earned a second NASCAR first on Wednesday: He became the first African-American driver to be elected to the NASCAR Hall of Fame.

The late driver from Virginia was among the latest group of five—all drivers, another first—voted in the hall on Wednesday. Scott joins popular NASCAR champion Bill Elliott, two-time series champ Joe Weatherly, 1960 champion Rex White and 26-time race winner Fred Lorenzen.

Scott competed in NASCAR's top series from 1961-73. He won his only race at Speedway Park in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1963, taking the checkered flag in the 100-mile feature after starting 15th. Scott started 495 Sprint Cup events and had a 147 top 10 finishes.

"I just felt like that his time was coming and he would say that too, one day it's going to happen," said Scott's son, Franklin.

When Scott's name was called there were enthusiastic shouts and applause from fans, officials and family members gathered at



AP Photos

The latest five-member class to be inducted into the NASCAR hall of Fame, pictured left to right: Wendell Scott, Bill Elliott, Rex White, Joe Weatherly, and Fred Lorenzen.

the NASCAR Hall of Fame rotunda. He was the second-leading vote getter behind Elliott from a 54-member panel, including current Sprint Cup champion Jimmie Johnson.

Scott, who died in 1990, was the first African-American driver to race fulltime in NASCAR's top series. He had won more than 100 races at local tracks before stepping up to race against NASCAR's best. Among Scott's legacy to the sport is the sport's Drive for Diversity initiative, one of the top youth development programs for multicultural and female drivers across the motorsports industry that's been in place since 2004.

"The next inductee gives me additional pride," NASCAR chairman Brian France said in introducing Scott, "Because he undoubtedly scaled and climbed the highest mountain."

Scott's story was loosely portrayed in the 1977 movie, "Greased Lightning," where Richard Pryor starred as Scott, the one-time taxi driver from Danville, Virginia.

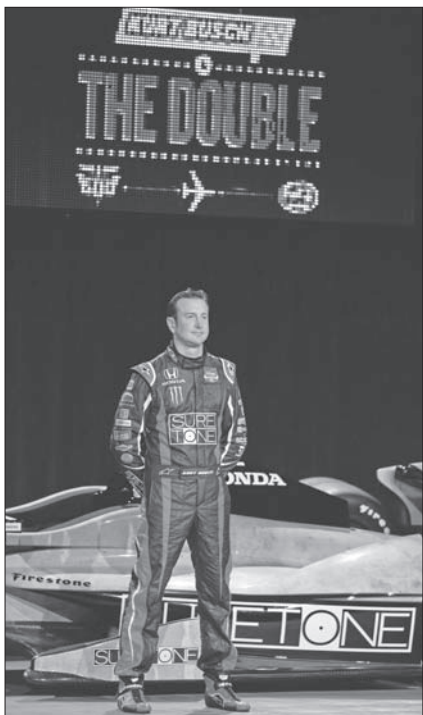
Elliott was the 1988 Sprint Cup champion and his 44 race victories rank 16th in NASCAR history. The driver nicknamed "Awesome Bill From Dawsonville" was also the first to win the Winston Million bonus in 1985 for capturing three of NAS-

CAR crown jewel races.

Weatherly, who died in 1964, won 25 races in NASCAR's premiere series including those back-to-back championships in 1962 and 1963.

White raced from 1956-64, winning 28 times in 233 events including six races during his championship season in 1960.

Lorenzen started as a mechanic in NASCAR in 1960, but became a driver by the end of the year. He won the first three of his 26 races the next season. In 1963, Lorenzen had a stretch of dominance like few others when he won eight of 16 races entered. At one point, he led 1,679 of the possible 1,953 laps run.



MICHAEL CONROY/AP

NASCAR driver Kurt Busch stands in front of his newly-unveiled IndyCar entry for the Indianapolis 500 during an announcement in Indianapolis.

## Double: Busch fortunate accident didn't cost him more than his car

### FROM BACK PAGE

He sure did, and it was a doozy. Busch spun coming out of the second turn on the 2.5-mile oval and smacked into the outside wall. It was the biggest crash of the month.

Busch was lucky his accident didn't cost him more than a car. And his Tony Stewart-owned NASCAR team surely said a big thanks that one of their key cogs won't miss any time in his day job.

"I'll get over it quick. I've wrecked cars before," Busch said. "I got sideways, I tried to correct it. I had it for a moment, but then I tried to overcorrect it."

Busch is attempting to become the fourth driver to attempt the back-to-back race feat known as "The Double." He's making his debut in IndyCar, and the 2004 Cup champion acknowledged that he made a rookie mistake on the track.

"We made a couple of changes, it was back to my most confident feel in the car," he said. "I just got too aggressive with sway bar changes, weight jacker changes, and didn't stay up on top of my adjustments."

At 1,500 pounds, IndyCars are lighter and have less horsepower than the 3,500-pound cars in NASCAR. Busch usually drives. That leaves IndyCars more susceptible to flips and even fatalities. Busch's crash sent tires and other debris strewn across the track.

The compact stock cars are designed for "bangin' and crashin' and side-by-side racing. Unlike the sleek IndyCars, stock cars are

modeled to look like ones sold on showroom floors. It's NASCAR's way of putting the "stock" back in stock-car racing. Grills and body lines are similar. Silhouettes are within millimeters of their showroom counterparts.

NASCAR drivers are protected by a roof. IndyCars have no doors, an open cockpit and about a dozen control buttons at the driver's disposal.

Busch started racing karts as a kid, and won races early in his career in just about every type of series, one reason he has the confidence he can pull off the dual feat. But for all his racing guile, he's still just a first-timer in open-wheel with only weeks of experience, a fact he made easy to forget with the blistering speeds posted during Indy practice. He'll start 12th in the 500—four spots higher than last year's champ, Tony Kanaan.

Busch's "NASCAR instincts" got him in trouble during the wreck, 2000 Indy 500 winner and former NASCAR driver Juan Pablo Montoya said. Montoya mimicked the motion of turning a wheel all the way as a source of the problem.

He explained: "Too much wheel... A NASCAR wheel goes and it stays there for a long time. It doesn't kick back. The IndyCar, an open wheel, kicks back."

"In NASCAR, you can fight with it all the way to the wall to try to save it. They slide and you can help it," Montoya said. "In IndyCar, when it goes, ask Kurt what happened. And NASCAR is a lot more forgiving because the car

is bigger, heavier, there's so much mass that it just takes a lot to get it moving."

Busch knows there's more to learn in his new ride, and he won't truly grasp the nuances of racing in corners or handling traffic until Sunday.

"I have to use my experience from the NASCAR world to feel the car, know what to do in traffic, predict restarts," he said. "It will be a full set of lessons learned in the first half of the race. If I'm there halfway, I'll start to apply it."

Stewart, a champion driver in both series, has offered Busch tips on the differences between each car.

"With those cars, it's all about momentum and being able to carry corner speeds," Stewart said. "It's a little more crucial in those cars than it is in ours because we have horsepower to fall back on."

Hours after the wreck, Busch said he felt fine, up for the grind of his media obligations. He went out for dinner in New York with rapper Ice-T and his wife, Coco. He'll return to racing Friday when the final 1-hour Indy 500 practice sessions will be held. The 35-year-old Busch is in the shape of his career thanks to workouts in a karate dojo, and newfound dedication to proper fitness and nutrition.

"I would consider him a possible top-three finisher, if he gets through all the problems during the race," 1998 Indy 500 winner Eddie Cheever said. "He's been incredible. I'm very impressed."



## MLB



TONY DEJAK/AP

Detroit Tigers reliever Al Burque walks back to the dugout after allowing the Cleveland Indians' Asdrubal Cabrera to score the winning run on a bases-loaded balk in the 13th inning Tuesday.

## AL roundup

# Indians complete sweep of Tigers on bases-loaded balk

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — After 475 pitches, 20 runs and more than five hours of baseball, the Cleveland Indians and Detroit Tigers settled this lengthy game in a most bizarre fashion: a walkoff balk.

Al Burque's bases-loaded balk in the 13th inning Wednesday gave the Indians an 11-10 victory.

According to STATS, the game-ending balk is the first since July 4, 2011, when the Royals' Aaron Crow committed one in the ninth inning against the White Sox. It's also the first walkoff balk in extra innings since June 16, 2011, when the Mets' D.J. Carrasco did it against the Braves.

"He just went to come set and he stopped and it was pretty blatant," Tigers catcher Alex Avila said. "There wasn't any controversy about that one."

Indians right fielder David Murphy tied the game that took 5 hours, 16 minutes in the ninth with a two-run homer off Joe Nathan.

Avila's two-out homer in the top of the 13th put Detroit ahead, but the Indians scored twice for their second walkoff win in the three-game sweep.

**Rangers 4, Mariners 3:** Nick Tepesch won for the first time in more than 10 months and Shin-Soo Choo hit a tie-breaking home run as host Texas defeated Seattle.

Choo led off the fifth with his homer into the bullpen in left-center. Joakim Soria pitched a perfect inning for his eighth save.

**Blue Jays 6, Red Sox 4:** Edwin Encarnacion had four homers for the second successive game as visiting Toronto sent Boston to its sixth consecutive loss.

Encarnacion has seven homers in his past six games. He is the first Toronto player to have four multi-homer games in a month, and the first major-leaguer to do so since Troy Tulowitzki in September of 2010.

**Royals 3, White Sox 1:** Jeremy Guthrie, Wade Davis and Greg Holland combined on a four-hitter as host Kansas City rallied in the eighth inning to avoid being swept in a three-game series.

The White Sox had scored 14 runs and hit five home runs in the first two games.

**Athletics 3, Rays 2:** Brandon Moss hit a solo



ELISE AMENDOLA/AP

Toronto's Edwin Encarnacion hit two homers for the second consecutive day as the Blue Jays beat the Red Sox 6-4 in Boston on Wednesday.

homer for visiting Oakland's only hit as the Athletics took advantage of sloppy Tampa Bay.

Oakland scored twice on two errors and a pair of hits in the second inning, helping the A's win for the first time since at least 1914 while getting only one hit, according to the team.

**Angels 2, Astros 1:** Jered Weaver pitched a two-hitter for his first complete game in nearly two years and Albert Pujols hit a go-ahead home run in the sixth for host Los Angeles.

Weaver (5-3) went the distance for the 12th time in 241 career starts and first time since Aug. 6, 2012, when he beat the Athletics 4-0 with a four-hitter. The three-time All-Star struck out five, walked one and retired 17 of his last 19 batters — including 10 straight after giving up a leadoff homer to George Springer in the fourth. Weaver is 5-1 with a 1.70 ERA in his last seven starts.

## NL roundup

# Reynolds' slam helps Brewers snap streak

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — The Milwaukee Brewers saved their swings for the game and earned another break from batting practice.

Mark Reynolds snapped an 0-for-12 slump with a first-inning grand slam off Ervin Santana. Kyle Lohse combined with Francisco Rodriguez on a five-hitter and Milwaukee ended a four-game skid by beating the Atlanta Braves 6-1 Wednesday night.

Carlos Gomez added a two-run homer for Milwaukee, which skipped batting practice after being shut out 5-0 Tuesday night. Brewers manager Ron Roenicke said he'll try the same formula again.

"No BP at all," Roenicke said of his plan for Thursday. "I think they would like not doing it again. That works."

Lohse (6-1) was sharp while going eight innings to win his sixth consecutive decision. He gave up one run on four hits with no walks and eight strikeouts. Lohse's only loss of the season came against the Braves on April 1.

**Reds 2, Nationals 1:** Alfredo Simon settled down after a poor start and came back after a 61-minute rain delay to win his sixth game, allowing one run over seven innings in visiting Cincinnati's victory over Washington.

Simon gave up a leadoff homer to Denard Span in the first, worked out of a jam in the second, then allowed only three more baserunners as the Reds finished a road trip by taking two of three from Washington.

**Giants 5, Rockies 1:** Hunter Pence hit one of visiting San Francisco's three solo homers and reliever Yusmeiro Petit threw three sharp innings after starter Matt Cain left with a strained right hamstring.

Pablo Sandoval and Brandon Crawford also connected for the NL West-leading Giants, who won at Coors Field for only the fifth time in 15 games dating back to last season.

**Marlins 14, Phillies 5:** Marcell Ozuna hit a grand slam and

drove in five runs to help power host Miami.

Christian Yelich, Garrett Jones, and Jarrod Saltalamacchia each drove in two runs for the Marlins, who have the best home record (18-6) in baseball.

**Dodgers 4, Mets 3:** Adrian Gonzalez homered for the third consecutive game, and Yasiel Puig and Hanley Ramirez hit back-to-back shots for visiting Los Angeles.

Hyun-Jin Ryu (4-2) came off the disabled list and pitched the Dodgers to their 11th victory in 12 meetings with the Mets dating to July 1, 2012. Ramirez drove in two runs and Los Angeles enjoyed most of the vocal support from the 23,721 fans at Citi Field, many of whom turned out to cheer Ryu.

**Cardinals 3, Diamondbacks 2 (12):** Arizona shortstop Chris Owings threw wildly to the plate on a bases-loaded grounder in the 12th inning, allowing Matt Holliday to score the winning run for host St. Louis.

The Cardinals cut down the go-ahead run at the plate in the 10th on Daniel Descalso's perfect relay throw from down the left field line to nail Ender Inciarte trying to score from first on Paul Goldschmidt's two-out double.

## Interleague

**Yankees 4, Cubs 2 (13):** Brendan Ryan scored off a wild pitch before John Ryan Murphy capped a two-run 13th inning with an RBI single as visiting New York beat Chicago.

New York scored two in the ninth against Hector Rondon to wipe out a 2-0 deficit. Cubs starter Jeff Samardzija pitched fourth ball through seven innings.

**Pirates 9, Orioles 8:** Tony Sanchez's tiebreaking single scored Starling Marte in the bottom of the seventh to put host Pittsburgh ahead to stay.

Andrew McCutchen went 3-for-4 with an RBI and his first two extra-base hits in more than two weeks for Pittsburgh, which won for only the third time in its past nine games.



CURTIS COMPTON, ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION/AP

Milwaukee's Mark Reynolds (7) is greeted at home plate by Carlos Gomez (27) after hitting a grand slam off Atlanta Braves pitcher Ervin Santana during the first inning Wednesday in Atlanta.



## SPORTS BRIEFS/NHL PLAYOFFS

## Briefly

## Czechs down US in hockey

The Associated Press

MINSK, Belarus — The Czech Republic scored three second-period, power-play goals in beating the United States 4-3 in the quarterfinals of the ice hockey world championship on Thursday.

Also, Russia blanked France 3-0 to face defending champion Sweden or Belarus in the semifinals on Saturday.

The Czechs will play Canada or Finland in the semis.

Captain Tomas Rolinek answered Brock Nelson's power-play goal in the opening period, and Tomas Hertl, Roman Cervenka and Ondrej Nemecek all beat veteran goaltender Tim Thomas on power plays in less than 10 minutes in the middle period.

U.S. captain Justin Abdelkader received a five-minute penalty and was ejected for a big hit on forward Vladimir Sobotka, who needed treatment on the ice and did not return to the game.

Czech coach Vladimir Ruzicka didn't give details about his injury but said he hoped Sobotka will be available for the semis.

Tyler Johnson reduced the deficit to 4-2 with 1:10 left in the game, and added his goal 12 seconds later, but it was too late and the U.S., bronze medalists last year, came up short.

## Senators: Change Redskins

WASHINGTON — Half the U.S. Senate urged NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell on Thursday to change the Washington Redskins' name, saying it is a racist slur and the time is ripe to replace it.

In a letter, 49 senators cited the NBA's quick action recently to ban Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling for life after he was heard on an audio recording making offensive comments about blacks. They said Goodell should formally push to rename the Redskins.

"We urge you and the National Football League to send the same clear message as the NBA did: that racism and bigotry have no place in professional sports," wrote the letter, which did not use the word "Redskins."

Redskins owner Daniel Snyder has refused to change the name, citing tradition. The franchise has been known as the Redskins since 1933, when it played in Boston.

## Air Force AD Mueh retiring

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — Air Force athletic director Hans Mueh is announcing his retirement, effective at the end of the upcoming academic year.

This will be Mueh's 11th year as AD and 43rd overall at the academy.

A retired Air Force brigadier general, Mueh has been dean of faculty for two years prior to his retirement from active duty in the summer of 2004 and his appointment as athletic director.

During his tenure, Air Force's men's basketball team has played in two NCAA tournaments and reached the NIT's Final Four, the men's hockey team has won five league titles and reached the NCAA tournament five times and the flagship football program has played in six bowl games.



NAM Y. HUH/AP

Los Angeles' Jake Muzzin, left, reacts Wednesday after scoring a goal during Game 2 of the Western Conference finals in Chicago.

## Kings explode, even series

## NHL scoreboard

## LA scores 6 goals after falling behind 2-0

By JAY COHEN

The Associated Press

**Conference finals**  
(Best-of-seven; 1st necessary)  
**EASTERN CONFERENCE**  
N.Y. Rangers 7, Montreal 6  
N.Y. Rangers 3, Montreal 1  
**Thursday:** at NY Rangers  
**Sunday:** at NY Rangers  
**x-Tuesday:** at Montreal  
**x-Thursday:** May 29; at NY Rangers  
**x-Friday:** May 31; at Montreal  
**WESTERN CONFERENCE**  
Chicago 1, Los Angeles 1  
Chicago 3, Los Angeles 1  
**Wednesday:** Los Angeles 6, Chicago 2  
**Saturday:** at Los Angeles  
**Monday:** at Los Angeles  
**Wednesday:** May 28; at Chicago  
**x-Friday:** May 30; at Los Angeles  
**x-Sunday:** June 1; at Chicago

**Wednesday**  
**Kings 6, Blackhawks 2**  
Los Angeles 0 1 5-6  
Chicago 2 0 2-1  
**First Period:** 1. Chicago, Ledyd 1 (Keith), 14:16 (pp).  
**Second Period:** 2. Chicago, Smith 2 (Bollig, Oduya), 1:40, 3. Los Angeles, Williams 6 (Richards, King), 18:14.  
**Third Period:** 4. Los Angeles, Carter 5 (Doughty, Vovnov), 1:37 (pp), 5. Los Angeles, Gaborik 4 (Martinez, Gaborik), 4:04 (pp), 6. Los Angeles, Toffoli 5 (Pearson, Carter), 8:59, 7. Los Angeles, Carter 6 (Pearson, Greene), 14:44, 8. Los Angeles, Carter 7, 16:29 (en).  
**Shots on Goal:** Los Angeles 8-11-12—31, Chicago 9-10-6—25.  
**Power-play opportunities:** Los Angeles 2 of 4; Chicago 1 of 4.  
**Goals:** Los Angeles, Quick 9-7-0 (25 shots-23 saves), Chicago, Crawford 9-5-0 (30-25).  
A—22,019 (19,717). T—2:37.

## Calendar

**May 25-31** — NHL combine, Toronto.  
**June 18** — Last possible day for Stanley Cup finals.  
**June 25** — NHL awards, Las Vegas.

CHICAGO — One big stop by Jonathan Quick turned into a scoring spree for Jeff Carter and Los Angeles.

These resilient Kings can come back in a hurry.

Carter scored three of Los Angeles' six straight goals, and the Kings beat the Chicago Blackhawks 6-2 Wednesday night to even the Western Conference finals at a game apiece.

Tyler Toffoli and Jake Muzzin also scored in Los Angeles' five-goal third period to help the Kings become the first visiting team to win in Chicago this postseason. The Blackhawks won their first seven home playoff games this year, but the Kings skated right by Chicago after the defending Stanley Cup champion Blackhawks took a 2-0 lead in the second period.

"Just sticking with what we need to do," Carter said. "You know, we got a good group of leaders in our room. We've been through comebacks and whatnot a lot lately. Obviously, not something we want to do. But we stick with it, grind it out, get the job done."

The early deficit was just a small speed bump for Los Angeles, dubbed the comeback Kings for their play in the opening two rounds.

Los Angeles trailed 3-0 in its first playoff series against San Jose, and won four straight games to eliminate the Sharks. The Kings overcame a 3-2 series deficit in the second round against post-seeded Anaheim.

"We know we can win," forward Jarret Stoll said. "That's the bottom line. They've got a good

team, but we feel we do, too."

Game 3 of the best-of-seven series is Saturday night in Los Angeles.

Nick Leddy and Ben Smith scored for Chicago, which won 3-1 in Game 1 on Sunday.

"The way it turned on a dime like that, I don't know if we've seen a game like that all year where we're doing everything all right and all of a sudden it was a disaster," Blackhawks coach Joel Quenneville said.

Chicago was in position for its fourth consecutive win before Carter redirected Drew Doughty's slap shot by Corey Crawford to tie it at 2 just 1:37 into the third. Muzzin then had another power-play score at 4:04 that gave Los Angeles the lead.

Once the Kings got going, they appeared to get almost anything they wanted against the sagging Blackhawks. Tanner Pearson set up goals by Toffoli at 8:59 and Carter at 14:44, and Carter added an empty-netter for his seventh of the playoffs.

"We knew the third period was going to be our best period in this series so far," Doughty said. "We were just adamant in here about coming out, taking the pressure, getting a goal early and we did that."

It was the first time Los Angeles had five goals in single postseason games since May 7, 1993, against Vancouver, according to STATS. Wayne Gretzky had two of those goals and watched Wednesday's game from a suite at the United Center.

It was the most goals allowed by the Blackhawks in a playoff game since a 6-1 loss to Detroit on May 24, 2009.

## NBA PLAYOFFS

## Spurs dominate Thunder for 2-0 lead

## Oklahoma City heads home searching for answers

By RAUL DOMINGUEZ

The Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — The San Antonio Spurs have been here before.

Tony Parker scored 22 points, Danny Green added 21 on seven three-pointers, and San Antonio used a dominant third quarter to pummel Oklahoma City 112-77 Wednesday night and take a 2-0 lead in the Western Conference finals.

The Spurs were in the same position in 2012 before the Thunder won four straight to capture the series and stun a Spurs team that appeared to have its best days behind it.

Well, San Antonio is back in the conference final with a commanding lead, wiser and even older.

"I know after the game, nobody is very happy in the locker room," Parker said. "Everybody is very focused, and we respect that team. We know they're very capable of a comeback, and they did that against us in 2012. We're just very focused and nobody is satisfied."

Game 3 is Sunday at Oklahoma City, where the Thunder will try to bounce back from the worst playoff loss in franchise history.

"I definitely don't feel good, and it shouldn't," Oklahoma City coach Scott Brooks said. "I hope our entire locker room doesn't feel good. You shouldn't feel good. We got our butts kicked."

Playing without Serge Ibaka



### Western Conference Game 3: San Antonio at Oklahoma City

AFN-Sports

2:30 a.m. Monday CET

9:30 a.m. Monday JKT

and given two days to adjust to dropping Game 1 by 17 points, the Thunder performed even worse.

Parker and Green each had eight points in the third quarter and San Antonio outscored Oklahoma City 33-18 in the period.

Kevin Durant and Russell Westbrook each finished with 15 points, but the third-quarter barrage made spectators of both in the fourth — not that they accomplished much when they did play. The star duo combined to shoot 13-for-40, including 4-for-14 in the third quarter.

"If they had won this game by one point, we'd still be down 0-2," Durant said. "[We] lost by a lot two games in a row. It's hard for you to stay together, but we have a group of guys that are not front-runners and we'll figure it out. That's all we've got to do."

An attempt to do that resulted in an argument between Durant and Westbrook as they walked off

the court at halftime.

"I was just getting on Kevin about some stuff and he got on me right back," Westbrook said. "And that's what teammates do, that's what leaders do, we get on each other. We came back and we talk about it and then we come out like nothing ever happened."

That didn't help in the second half.

Durant made his first two field goals of the third quarter, but did not have another for the rest of the half.

Oklahoma City has yet to find a consistent third option on offense through two games. After combining to score five points in the opener, fellow starters Nick Collison, Kendrick Perkins and Thabo Sefolosha had just four in Game 2.

Durant said he and Westbrook didn't stop trusting their teammates, but during a 17-minute stretch spanning the second and third quarters, they took shots on 27 of 38 possessions.

Asked why, Durant said, "Because we're the focal point of the offense."

And the Spurs realize that, which is why they have made them work hard for every point.

"Work, work for everything," Duncan said of the Spurs' defensive strategy. "Keep them in the free throw line, make their shots as tough as possible. Those guys are great scorers, we know that, but we want to make them score over a hand and work for everything they get."



DARREN ABATE/AP

Spurs guard Tony Parker, left, of France, drives past Thunder guard Thabo Sefolosha during the first half of Game 2 of the Western Conference finals on Wednesday in San Antonio.

## Scoreboard

## Conference finals

(Best-of-seven; x if necessary)

## EASTERN CONFERENCE

## Indiana 1, Miami 1

Indiana 107, Miami 96

Miami 87, Indiana 83

Saturday at Miami

Monday at Miami

Wednesday, May 28, at Indiana

X-Sunday, June 1, at Indiana

## WESTERN CONFERENCE

## San Antonio 2, Oklahoma City 0

San Antonio 122, Oklahoma City 105

Wednesday, May 21, at San Antonio

X-Sunday, June 2, at San Antonio

## Spurs 112, Thunder 77

Oklahoma City — Durant 6 11 20 3-5

Parker 12 24 0-0 2, Perkins 12 0-0 2

Green 16 24 0-0 15, Sefolosha 0 0 0

0, Adams 4 5 1-4, Jackson 4 7 0-0 8

Nurkic 4-0 0-0, Fisher 15 0-0 2, Jones 1-0

4-0 2, Lamb 6-5 1-13, Robertson 0 3-0 0

Totals 58-95 107-77

SAN ANTONIO — Leonard 2-4 0-0 4

Duncan 5-12 4-4 14, Splitter 2-4 5-9 9

Parker 17 22 2-2 20, San Antonio 5-23

(Green 7-10, Ginobili 1-2, Diaz 1-2, Bon-

ner 4-0 1-0, Joseph 9-17, Duncan 0-1, Parker

4-0 2-0, Agres 1-1 0-0 2, Bonner

0-0 0-0, Totals 41-82 112-77

SAN ANTONIO — Leonard 2-4 0-0 4

Duncan 5-12 4-4 14, Splitter 2-4 5-9 9

Parker 17 22 2-2 20, San Antonio 5-23

(Green 7-10, Ginobili 1-2, Diaz 1-2, Bon-

ner 4-0 1-0, Joseph 9-17, Duncan 0-1, Parker

4-0 2-0, Agres 1-1 0-0 2, Bonner

0-0 0-0, Totals 41-82 112-77

By TIM REYNOLDS

The Associated Press

MIAMI — The long break between games in the Eastern Conference finals could be welcomed by Indiana, after Pacers guard Paul George was diagnosed Wednesday with a concussion that will force him to complete several NBA-mandated procedures before he can return to the matchup against the Miami Heat.

The series, now tied at a game apiece, doesn't resume until Saturday night.

And what at first might have been looked at as an awkward break — three full days off until the next game day — is probably now welcomed by the Pacers. Indiana not only needs to get George cleared but also had starters Lance Stephenson, Roy Hibbert and David West all either limping or ailing in the final minutes of the Game 2 loss on Tuesday night.

George was hurt with 6:52 left in the fourth quarter of Miami's Game 2 victory. He stole the ball from Heat guard Dwyane Wade, but could not keep control and wound up tumbling face-first to the court. Wade, also going for the ball, struck the back of George's



### Eastern Conference Game 3: Indiana at Miami

AFN-Sports

2:30 a.m. Sunday CET

9:30 a.m. Sunday JKT

head with his left knee, then appeared to scrape the same area with his right leg as he also fell to the hardwood.

George remained down for a few moments, but played the remainder of the game. He revealed afterward that he "blacked out" on the play, something that the Pacers said was not related to their medical staff.

"George exhibited no symptoms of a concussion and, in response to questions from the Pacers' medical staff, he denied dizziness, nausea, and issues with his vision," the Pacers said Wednesday. "He was also active and aware of his surroundings. As a result, the Indiana medical staff

did not suspect a concussion."

But after the "blacked out" comment, the Pacers evaluated George again Wednesday morning.

"This case illustrates that concussion evaluation is an ongoing process and manifestations of the injury may not always present immediately," said NBA Concussion Program Director Dr. Jeffrey Kutcher, who will discuss George's return-to-participation process with the Pacers' team doctor before clearance is given for a return.

Miami evened the series with an 87-83 win, after LeBron James and Wade controlled the fourth quarter for the Heat. George made a three-pointer to give Indiana a 73-69 lead on the possession immediately preceding the one where he got tangled with Wade. The Heat answered with a 13-2 run over the next 5 minutes, James scoring nine of those points and Wade getting the other four.

Just like that, the Heat grabbed the home-court edge in the series.

"They're a tough bunch," Heat forward Chris Bosh said of the Pacers. "Very good team and we're going to continue to challenge each other throughout the

series. It's just now getting started. We have to take care of home court. First, we can really relax for a few days, and then get to it on Saturday."

Both teams were off on Wednesday.

"I just know I've got warriors behind me, and we're just going to take it to them," Stephenson said. "We've just got to take our time. It's a long series. We've just got to stay together."

The NBA's concussion policy states that once a player is diagnosed, he needs to be "held out of all activity until he is symptom-free at rest" and until neurological signs return to normal. George will have to go through tests of increasing exertion before he gets cleared.

Pacers coach Frank Vogel said he was told during the game that George was "good to go."

There were plenty of other aches and pains for Indiana to deal with. West appeared to get poked in an eye in the fourth quarter, Hibbert was flexing his left leg after a tumble in the final seconds, and Stephenson went down at midcourt after colliding with Wade on the game's final play, grabbing the area around his right knee.

## SPORTS



## Spurs on

San Antonio dominant again in Game 2 win over OKC | **Page 31**

## AUTO RACING

## Double dragon



PHOTOS BY PATRICK SEMANSKY, ABOVE, AND MICHAEL CONROY, BELOW/AP

NASCAR bad boy Kurt Busch, above, working out, and below, driving out of the pit area during an Indy 500 practice run, is trying to own the title of baddest man on the track by pulling off racing's version of an IronMan triathlon, attempting to complete — and win — both the Indianapolis 500 and the Coca-Cola 600 in the same day.

## Busch getting crash course on IndyCar in pursuit of rare feat

By DAN GELSTON  
The Associated Press

**W**ith one sudden spin and slam into the wall, Kurt Busch's IndyCar burst into flames.

His shot at The Double, almost up in smoke.

Busch walked away unscathed, his car totaled for this weekend's Indy 500. He'll have an Andretti Autosport backup ready to go for race day, when he tries to make history by becoming only the second driver to complete 1,100 total miles by racing in the Indianapolis 500 and the Coca-Cola 600 in the same day.

"You're here this morning, you're upright,

**'I'll get over it quick.  
I've wrecked cars before.'**

**Kurt Busch**

NASCAR driver, after totaling his car during a practice session for the Indy 500. Busch is attempting to become just the second driver to complete both the Indy 500 and the Coca-Cola 600 in the same day.

you're OK, but you crashed yesterday," host Matt Lauer said on NBC's "Today" show over a photo of Busch's No. 26 Honda on fire.

**SEE DOUBLE ON PAGE 27**



Scott first African-American elected to NASCAR Hall | **Page 27**

Bases-loaded balk gives Tribe sweep over Tigers | **Page 29**

Kings explode for six goals, tie series with Blackhawks | **Page 30**